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MEDIEVAL NARRATIVE

A BOOK OF TRANSLATIONS

BY

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PREFACE

This book has grown out of the needs of an undergraduate course in medieval literature. Any such course, even the most elementary, must be comparative in its nature, because of the intricate borrowing and lending of narrative material from one country to another during the Middle Ages. Any student who would work in this field must have no inconsiderable linguistic equipment; but this requirement is, unfortunately, an insuperable barrier in the case of most American undergraduates. One would like to assume, for instance, that all of them can read at least modern French and German by their junior and senior years, but many of them fail to meet even this modest qualification, to say nothing of Old French and Middle High German. This is the more unfortunate since the subject matter of medieval narrative—the Nibelung cycle, the Grail stories, the Tristan legend, and all the lore of Arthurian romances—appeals strongly to undergraduate classes, as anyone who has taught this material knows; perhaps because they come to it with a certain freshness, and find it unhackneyed in comparison with the more familiar classical legends. But enthusiasm is not enough when one is dealing with texts in Old French, Old Icelandic, Middle Dutch, and Medieval Latin; and in the face of the linguistic deficiency of college students a teacher is forced to rely on translations for class use.

Much medieval literature has been translated, of course. There are the beautifully sensitive versions by Jessie L. Weston of some of the romances, a number of very important texts in Everyman's Library, the Saga Library, and many isolated works; but it is astonishing how much remains to be done. There is a mine of unworked material in the *chansons de geste*, for instance; and the Scandinavian literature of the saga age has by no means been exhausted. Moreover, a number of existent translations need to be done again, since they are out of print

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or out of date. This volume is but a slight attempt in comparison with the work that is to be done. I hope that it may be followed by others.

A word about the choice of material. It has been guided by need, as I have said; not entirely by literary merit. Thus, "The History of the Fall of Troy" by Dares Phrygius has been included because of its importance as an ultimate source and because of the inaccessibility of the text, even in the original; "The Nativity and Conquests of Alexander" for a somewhat similar reason, and because the whole Alexander cycle derived from it offers a rich store-house of medieval tales of the fabulous; the *fabliaux* and "saints' lives," because they represent a type of narrative not easily reached by an elementary student; "Horned Seyfried," because of its peculiar relation to the Nibelung cycle. No explanation is needed, I take it, for the presence of the two sagas, nor for "Tristan's Folly," "Heinrich the Unfortunate," and the *chansons de geste;* and a story as beautiful and simple as the Middle Dutch "Beatrice" carries its own justification with it. I am deeply indebted to Mr. Harold de Wolf Fuller, and to his publishers, the Harvard Coöperative Society, for permission to reprint here, in alien surroundings, his exquisite translation of that poem. To Professor A. J. Barnouw also, of Columbia University, I wish to express my thanks for his generous help in revising and correcting my translation of "Charles and Elegast," a Middle Dutch poem too little known to medievalists outside of Holland.

M. S.

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THE ICELANDIC SAGAS

INTRODUCTION TO THE ICELANDIC SAGAS

The Icelandic sagas offer us a wealth of prose narrative of unparalleled literary merit. Nowhere else in the Middle Ages, and seldom since, has prose fiction been written with such brilliant realistic power, economy of means, and consummate art of characterization, as in Iceland and Scandinavia during the saga age. This is the more remarkable since the prose of other vernacular literatures at the time was weak and halting in the extreme. Nor is the literary prestige of the northern countries based on a few isolated instances only. A whole library of these tales—realistic novels of the heroic age, one might call them—has come down to us; and even the inferior ones are marked by the characteristic merits of the school as a whole: incisive style, keen observation, lively, pointed dialogue. The subject matter is just what one would expect of the viking age: adventure and combat, the feuds of families, raids at land and sea, the duels of proud, belligerent warriors. Women are not wanting in the sagas too, but their rôle differs from that usually assigned to them in modern novels. They, like the men, are often fierce, resentful and quarrelsome; and although they are technically subjected to the men of their families, they contrive to exercise a great amount of power by an indirect domestic control. Very often it happens in the sagas that the quarrels, resentments, and jealousies of the women are sufficient to involve a whole country in feuds and slayings. Some of these Amazons were quite capable of dipping their hands in blood themselves or of standing by with equanimity while deeds of blood and violence were done before their eyes. It is no wonder, therefore, that the spirit of the literature, as of the age itself, was alien to romantic love and woman-worship, and that other themes attracted the attention of the saga writers in preference to that. Heroic society found other human relationships more interesting.

The *Gunnlaug Saga* and the *Fridthjof Saga* are exceptions to the general rule in that they are primarily love stories, but it

will be found that here the treatment of love is more practical and more heroic than that to which French medieval romance has accustomed us. There is a rugged faithfulness about the devotion of these two vikings, but they do not let it interfere with loyalty to king or overlord, trips abroad, and marauding expeditions. The action of the stories was no less important, from the point of view of the authors, than the emotional states of the characters. So far as style is concerned, therefore, the two stories will serve as typical enough examples of Old Scandinavian literature, even though the plots are not so uncompromisingly stark as some of the others.

The events and persons of the *Gunnlaug Saga* belong in the late tenth century, or more specifically, about the year 1000. We know this partly by internal evidence, for the author refers to the conversion of Iceland as a contemporary occurrence. Gunnlaug was one of the famous skalds of the time, and some such adventures as those here described probably did befall him; but there has evidently been a development of the plot and a heightening of artistic effect by a later narrator. The *Fridthjof Saga,* on the other hand, is probably more fictitious than not. It is interesting, however, for its presentment of superstitions and heathen customs, quite apart from the narrative itself. Both stories are marked by fine delineation of character and a telling use of climax.

The edition of the *Gunnlaug Saga* used for this translation is that by E. Mogk, Halle, 1908; for the *Fridthjof Saga* the edition by Ludwig Larsson, Halle, 1901, was used. There is an earlier, simpler form of the tale edited by Gustav Wenz, Halle, 1914.

THE SAGA OF FRIDTHJOF THE BOLD

I. This saga relates that King Beli ruled over the land about Sognefjord. He had three children. One of his sons was hight Helgi, and the other Halfdan, but the daughter was called Ingebjorg: she was fair and wise, and the best of the King's children.

There was a certain strand west of the fjord. There was a great farmstead there called Baldr's Close: in it were a sanctuary and a great court with a wooden fence about it. Many gods were there, but Baldr was most esteemed. So great was the zeal of heathen folk that no injury might be done there, either to man or beast; and men were not permitted to have dealings with women there.

The King ruled at Systrand, but beside the greater part of the fjord there was a farmstead called Framness. A man dwelt there who was called Thorstein, and he was a Viking's son. His garth lay opposite to the royal seat. Thorstein and his wife had a son called Fridthjof. He was the greatest and strongest of all men and well-skilled even in childhood. He hight Fridthjof the Bold. He was so well loved that all men wished him well.

The King's children were young when their mother died. Hilding was the name of a good husbandman nigh Sognefjord. He asked to foster the King's daughter. She was reared up there well and carefully. She was called Ingebjorg the Fair. Fridthjof too was being fostered by Hilding the husbandman, and he and the King's daughter were foster children together: they surpassed all other children.

The goods of King Beli began to slip out of his hands

when he grew old. Thorstein had the third part of the kingdom to manage, and its greatest strength was to be found where Thorstein was. Thorstein entertained the King every third year at great expense, and the King him every second year.

Helgi Beli's son soon waxed to be a great heathen. The two brothers had few friends. Thorstein had a ship hight Ellidi, whereon fifteen men rowed at each side. It had curved prows, and it was mighty as a sea-going ship. The side of it was spangled with iron.—So strong was Fridthjof that he rowed at two oars in the bow of Ellidi, and each oar was thirteen ells long, and two men manned each other oar. Fridthjof appeared to surpass the other young men of that time. The King's sons begrudged it to him that he was more praised than they.

Now King Beli took ill, and as he grew worse he summoned his sons to him and said to them: "This sickness will fetch me my death. But this I would ask of you, that ye keep the friends of long standing that I have had, for meseems that ye fall short of Thorstein and Fridthjof his son, both in counsel and valor. Ye shall raise a burial mound for me." Thereafter King Beli died.

Soon after this Thorstein took ill. He said to Fridthjof, his kinsman, "I would ask of thee to be yielding to the King's sons, for it befits the dignity of their state, and moreover for thee my foreboding is good. I wish to be buried opposite the mound of King Beli on this side of the fjord, down by the sea. Then it will be an easy thing for us two to call to each other concerning what will happen."

Fridthjof's foster brothers were called Bjorn and Asmund. They were great men and strong.

A little later Thorstein died. He was buried as he had said, and Fridthjof came into possession of the land and chattels after him.

II. Fridthjof became very famous and showed himself valorous in all manly tests. He thought most of his foster

brother Bjorn, but Asmund attended on both of them. After his father he took over the ship Ellidi as his best treasure; and he had also a gold ring that was very precious. There was none dearer in Norway.

Fridthjof was so excellent a man that many people said he was no less worthy than the two brothers, barring only the royal dignity. For that they laid feud and enmity upon Fridthjof, and it weighed heavily on them that he was spoken of as a greater man; and they thought they observed that their sister Ingebjorg and Fridthjof were on loving terms.

Then it came to pass that the kings had to be entertained by Fridthjof at Framness. And as usual, he feasted all of them more than they themselves were worth. Ingebjorg was there, and she spoke a long time with Fridthjof. The Princess said to him:

"Thou hast a goodly ring."

"True it is," said Fridthjof. After that the brothers went home, and their envy of Fridthjof grew.

A little later Fridthjof became very unhappy. Bjorn, his foster brother, asked him what ailed him. He said he was inclined to woo Ingebjorg, "though my rank is less than her brothers', I think I am of no meaner sort." Bjorn said:

"Let us do it!"

Then Fridthjof went with some men to see the brothers. The Kings were sitting on their father's burial-mound. Fridthjof greeted them and spoke his request that he woo their sister Ingebjorg. The Kings answered:

"It is ill-advised to ask us to marry her to a man without worship, and we refuse it quite." Fridthjof answers:

"Then is my errand briefly done. And in retaliation for this I shall never come to your aid, though ye have need of it."

They said they would take care of that. Then Fridthjof went home and resumed his former blitheness.

III. Hring was the name of a prince. He ruled over Ringerick in Norway. He was a rich petty king and well-off, and at this time advanced in years. He said to his men: "I have heard that Beli's sons have broken off the friendship with Fridthjof, who is the most excellent of men. Now I will send some men to the Kings and give them the choice of following me and yielding me tribute, else I will send a band of men against them. And it will be easy to do, for they have neither the strength nor the wisdom to oppose me. It would be a matter of great renown for me to conquer them in my old age."

Thereafter the messengers of Hring went to the brothers and said: "King Hring sends a message to you, either to yield him tribute, or have him make war on your kingdom." They said they would not learn to do in their youth what they did not wish to know how to do in their old age: to serve him in disgrace. "We shall assemble all the forces we can get." And so it was done.

But as their troops seemed but few to them, they sent Hilding, their foster father, to Fridthjof, and asked him to join the troops of the Kings. Fridthjof was sitting at chess when Hilding came. He said,

"Our Kings send word to thee, and they would have thy fighting men for the war against King Hring, who wishes to fall upon their kingdom wrongfully and tyrannously." Fridthjof made no answer, but said to Bjorn, with whom he was playing,

"That is a weak point, brother! But thou needest not change it. Rather will I move against the red piece, to know whether it is protected." Hilding spoke again:

"King Helgi bade me tell thee, Fridthjof, that thou shouldst go on this raid, else thou wilt suffer hardship when they come back." Bjorn said,

"Thou hast a choice of two moves, brother; two ways of saving it." Fridthjof said,

"First it would be wise to move against this King, and that will be an easy choice."

Hilding received no other answer to his errand. He went back quickly to the Kings and told them the reply of Fridthjof. They asked Hilding what sense he made of these words. Hilding said, "When he spoke of the weak point he meant this raid of yours; and when he said he would move with the fair piece, that must refer to your sister Ingebjorg. Therefore look to her well. And when I promised him hardship from you, Bjorn called that a choice, but Fridthjof said that the King had first to be attacked, and by that he meant King Hring."

After that they made ready and had Ingebjorg moved to Baldr's Close, and eight women with her. They said Fridthjof would not be so bold as to go to see her there, "for no one would be so reckless as to harm anyone there."

But the brothers went south to Jadar and met King Hring at Sokna Sound. King Hring had the greatest store of horses, for the brothers had said they thought it a shame to fight with so old a man, who could not mount a horse without help.

IV. When the Kings were gone Fridthjof donned his festal clothes and put his ring on his hand. Then the foster brothers went down to the sea and launched Ellidi. Bjorn said:

"Whither now, brother?" Fridthjof said,

"To Baldr's Close, to find entertainment with Ingebjorg." Bjorn said,

"One should not make the gods angry." Fridthjof answered,

"That must be risked; and moreover I esteem the favor of Ingebjorg greater than Baldr's wrath."

After that they rowed out over the fjord and went up to Baldr's Close into Ingebjorg's bower. She sat there with eight maids. There were eight men also. And when they came there, the hall was all hung with costly stuffs and precious fabrics. Ingebjorg arose and said,

"Why art thou so bold, Fridthjof, as to come here without my brothers' leave, and bring down the anger of the gods upon thyself?" Fridthjof said,

"However that may be, I hold thy love dearer than the wrath of the gods." Ingeborg answered,

"Thou shalt be welcome here, and all thy men." Then she gave him place to sit beside her, and she drank the best wine with him, and so they sat and took their pleasure. Then Ingebjorg saw the goodly ring on his hand and asked whether he owned that treasure. Fridthjof said it was his. She praised it very highly. Fridthjof said, "I will give thee this ring if thou wilt promise not to part with it, and send it to me if thou wilt not have it. And herewith each of us shall pledge faith to the other." With this pledge they exchanged rings.

Fridthjof was often in Baldr's Close over night, and every day he fared back and forth and sought entertainment with Ingebjorg.

V. Now it is to be told of the brothers that they met King Hring, and he had the greater numbers. Men went between them and sought to bring about an understanding, so that there would be no strife. King Hring said he would do it on condition that they be subject to his power and wed their sister Ingebjorg the Fair to him, together with the third part of their possessions as dowry. The Kings agreed to this, since they saw that they had to do with a much greater strength than theirs. This agreement was confirmed, and the marriage was to be in Sogne, that King Hring might come to meet his betrothed. The brothers went home with their men and yielded them to their misfortune.

When Fridthjof thought it was time that the brothers might come home he said to the Princess: "Ye have entertained us well and fairly. Goodman Baldr hath not been wroth with us. But when ye know that the Kings have come home, hang out your linen bedclothes on the great

hall, for it is the highest in the garth; and we shall see it from our stead." The Princess said,

"Ye have not done this according to the example of other men, but surely we have to make our friends welcome, if ye come."

Then Fridthjof went home. And the next morning he went out early; and when he came in he spoke and said this stave:

"I must tell our men an end has come
To all our trips of delight;
The warriors fare no more to the ships,
For the cloths are hung out so white."

Then they went out and saw that all the great hall was covered over with white linen cloth. Then Bjorn said,

"Now the Kings must be come home, and but a short time may we sit here in peace; and I think it wise to gather our men." And so it was done. A crowd of men streamed thither.

The brothers soon heard of the doings of Fridthjof and of his men. King Helgi said,

"Meseems it is a wonder that Baldr will thole any shame from Fridthjof. We must send men to him and wit of him what atonement he will offer us. Else shall I order him out of the land, for our strength is not great enough at this time to fight with them."

Hilding their foster father and some friends of Fridthjof brought this message to Fridthjof. They said: "The Kings require of thee in atonement, Fridthjof, that thou shalt fetch the tribute of the Orkney Isles, which hath not been yielded since Beli died. They have need of the money, for they are marrying their sister Ingebjorg with a dowry of many chattels." Fridthjof said,

"It is respect for both our ancestors alone that moves us to a peace-making; but the brothers will not hold faith with us. I wish to have it laid down that all our pos-

sessions be left in peace while I am away." This was promised and affirmed with oaths.

Now Fridthjof made ready his departure, and chose him the boldest and ablest men he might find. They were eighteen all told. Fridthjof's men asked him if he did not wish to go first to King Helgi and be reconciled to him and beg off the wrath of Baldr. Fridthjof said,

"I swear that I shall not ask King Helgi for peace." After that he went aboard Ellidi, and they sailed out over Sognefjord.

But when Fridthjof had departed from home, King Halfdan said to his brother Helgi, "That would be a greater and larger sign of our power, if Fridthjof received some retribution for his wrong-doing. Let us burn his homestead, and send such a storm after him and his men that they may be destroyed."

Helgi said that should be done. Thereafter they burned down all of the homestead at Framness and stole all his goods. Then they sent to two women skilled in magic, Heidr and Hamglama, and paid them to send such a storm upon Fridthjof and his men that they might all be lost at sea. So they practised their magic; they fared to the magic seat with charms and sorcery.

VI. But when Fridthjof and his men left Sogne there came upon them bitter weather and a great storm. The waves ran very high. The ship went fast, for it was a swift one and excellent for sea-faring. Then Fridthjof spoke a stave:

"From Sogne I loosened and let rush forth
The wind-steed smeared with tar:
But maidens were taking delight of mead
In Baldr's Close afar:
The storm grows fierce; although the sea
With water our ships should fill,
May the women who love us flourish aye
And have good morrow still!"

Bjorn said, "It were better if thou hadst something else to do than sing ditties about the maids of Baldr's Close."

"Yet it will not grow milder," said Fridthjof.

They were carried north to a sound near the Sulen Isles. The storm was hardest there. Then said Fridthjof:

"Greatly the sea begins to swell;
It smites against the sky:
Some ancient magic is the cause
That billows run so high;
I will not fight in so great storm
Against the angry sea:
The icy Sulen Isles shall shield
The men who fare with me."

So they lay under the Sulen Isles and thought to tarry there, and straightway the storm ceased. Then they departed and sailed from under the Isle.

Their journey now seemed promising, for they had a favoring wind at the time. Then it chanced that the wind became sharper. Fridthjof said,

"Of yore from Framness I rowed forth
And Ingebjorg oft spake with me:
Now I must sail in bitter-cold weather,
And beneath me fares the beast of the sea."

And when they were come far out into the ocean from under the land, the sea became mightily unquiet a second time, and there was a great tempest with such a driving snow-storm that one stem of the ship could not be seen from the other. And so much water ran on the ship that they had to bale constantly. Then said Fridthjof:

"So great the magic storm, no man
Can see men by his side:
Bold warriors, we drive at sea
That runs in stormy tide;

The Solund Isles are vanished now,
And eighteen men must bale
The water out of Ellidi
That runs in stormy gale."

Bjorn said, "He who fares far must meet hardship."

"That is certain, foster brother," said Fridthjof; and he spoke:

"Helgi hath caused that waves run high
Foaming and crested white;
Not so it was when in Baldr's Close
I kissed a maiden bright;
More great than the King's should be the love
Of Ingebjorg for me,
For rather than my good hap I wish
Her wish, whate'er it be."

"It may be," said Bjorn, "that she wishes better hap for thee than this present state. But it is not ill to know this too."

Fridthjof said that there was a chance to test their good followers, though it was blither in Baldr's Close. They made them ready valiantly, for there were bold men gathered there, and their ship was the best that has ever been in the Northland. Then Fridthjof spoke a stave:

"We have come west on the waters
And no man can be seen:
Whiter is the ocean to look upon
As ashen dust, I ween:
The swan-like billows are heaped o'er the ship
And mightily they fall;
The sea casts Ellidi into a wave
That stands up like a wall."

Then there came a heavy sea over them, so that they stood in the midst of bale-water. Fridthjof spake a stave:

"The sea breaks o'er me, and the storm
Is come on Ellidi;
If I must sink in the hill of the swans
One will lament for me:
The maiden who hung linen out
To whiten, formerly."

Bjorn said, "Dost thou suppose the maids of Sogne will weep much for thee?" Fridthjof said,

"I think it, surely."

Then the storm beat against the ship so that a torrent fell on it, but it helped greatly that the ship was so good and the warriors aboard it were hardy. Then Bjorn quoth a stave:

"That dame, methinks, doth not desire
To drink good hap to thee;
The bright ring-wearer doth not ask
Thy nearness, sikerly.
Salt are mine eyes, for they are drenched
Within the ocean gale,
Now bite my eyelids; now begins
The strength of arms to fail."

Asmund said, "It is of no avail, though thou make test of men's arms, for ye had no pity for us as we rubbed our eyes when ye did rise so early to go to Baldr's Close of yore."

"Why dost thou fail to sing, Asmund?" said Fridthjof.

"I shall not," said Asmund, and spoke a stave,

"Upon the ship the sea broke in,
And there was turmoil great;
On me alone the task did fall
To do the work of eight;
A fairer task it was to bring
The women's morning-meal
Than bale out water in this wave
That's sheer above our keel."

"Thou sayest no less of thy help than is true," said Fridthjof, and laughed; "but now thou showest thy thrall's ancestry, since thou wouldst be busied a-cooking."

Then the storm waxed fierce anew, so that the men on the ship thought the great cliffs and rocks a more likely place for them, than the toppling sea-waves that broke thus mightily over the ship. Then quoth Fridthjof:

"Upon a bolster I have sat
In Baldr's Close of yore;
Before the Princess I have said
All that I knew of lore:
Now I must mount upon the bed
Of the sea-goddess Ran:
But into Ingebjorg's bed
Will mount another man."

Bjorn said: "A great distress is come upon us, foster brother; now there is despair in thy words, and that is a pity for so bold a warrior." Fridthjof said,

"That is neither despair nor distress, though the stave speaks of our trips of delight, but it may turn out that I thought more often of them than was needful. Many men would think death more certain than life, if they were in our case. But I shall make thee an answer;" and he spake:

"Now I have yielded payment for
The trips I made of late;
To me, not thee, came Ingebjorg
Together with maidens eight:
In Baldr's Close our tempered rings
Of gold we did exchange;
Not far away was He who guards
The fields of Halfdan's grange."

Bjorn said, "We must rest content with things that have chanced." Then there came so heavy a sea that it struck away the gunwale and both bows, and washed over-

board four men and destroyed all of them. Then quoth Fridthjof:

"Both prows broke in the mighty wave:
Four men sank in a bottomless grave."

"Now it is to be expected," said Fridthjof, "that some of our men will fare to Ran. We shall not be worthy comers when we arrive saving if we prepare ourselves fittingly. Methinks it is wise that each man have some gold on him." Then he smote asunder the ring that was Ingebjorg's and shared it with his men, and he spoke a stave:

"This red ring, that was owned erewhile
By Halfdan's wealthy sire,
Shall be cut up ere Aegir hath
Destroyed our life entire;
The folk in Ran's great hall shall see
Upon us ruddy gold
If we appear as guests, for this
Befits such heroes bold."

Then Bjorn said, "Such forebodings are not certain, and despair is not yet."

Then Fridthjof and his men found that the ship made great speed, but they knew not whither they had come, for that so great a darkness fell on them that the stem was not seen from the center, what with driving spray and storm, frost and snowdrift and bitter cold. Then Fridthjof climbed up in the mast; and when he was mounted up he said to his fellows,

"I see a marvellous sight. A great whale encircles the ship, and I suspect that we must be near some land, and he would let us from the land. Methinks that King Helgi does not deal with us in friendly wise: it is no loving message that he sends us. I see two women on the whale's back, and they must wield this hostile storm with their

worst spells and magic. Now we must make trial whether our fortune be greater, or their witchcraft. Ye shall steer towards them as straight as may be, and I shall thrash this beast with cudgels." And he spoke a stave:

"I see troll-wives yonder,
Upon the sea they ride;
Helgi hath sent them hither
To follow on the tide:
But both backs shall be broken
Belonging to those twain
By Ellidi, before she fares
From off the open main."

It is said that Ellidi had gained the magic power of understanding the speech of men. Then Bjorn said,

"Now we can see the honorable behavior of the brothers towards us!"

Bjorn went to the rudder, but Fridthjof seized a pole and ran to the prow and spoke a stave:

"Hail, Ellidi, hail! and leap
High on the waters now.
Break thou these two witches'
Teeth, and break their brow!
Sunder from off the monstrous thing
One foot or both, and eke
Break for each evil woman
Her chinbone and her cheek!"

Then he shot his pole at one of these change-shapes, and Ellidi's beak smote on the back of the other; and both their backs were broken. But the whale dived under and departed and was seen no more. Then the storm began to abate, but the ship was heavy-laden with water. Fridthjof bade his men to raise the ship by baling; but Bjorn said there was no need of that labor. "Beware of wan-hope, brother," said Fridthjof. "It hath been erewhile the

custom of bold men to give help while they might, whatsoever might come afterwards." Fridthjof spoke a stave:

"Fear death no more, my valiant thanes;
Rejoice ye, and be glad:
I know that Ingebjorg will be mine
By all the dreams I've had."

Then they baled up the ship, and they had now drawn nearer to the land. A blast of wind blew against them. Then Fridthjof took two oars again and rowed mightily with them.

The weather became brighter, and they saw that they were come out on Evie Sound; and there they landed. The men were greatly forwearied, but Fridthjof was so valiant that he bore seven out of the flood-mark; Bjorn carried two, and Asmund one. Then said Fridthjof:

"Eight were the men that to the hearth
I bore along with me;
Weary they waxed in the driving snow
That was upon the sea.
But now upon the sandy beach
I have brought up my sail,
Not easy it is on the ocean
To fight against the gale."

VII. Angantyr ruled over Evie at the time when Fridthjof and his men came ashore there. It was his custom when he was drinking to have a man sit out by the wall-fenster of his mead-hall and look out against the wind. He was supposed to quaff from a drinking horn; and another was filled as soon as one was emptied. He who held watch there when Fridthjof landed was called Hallvard. Hallvard saw the coming of Fridthjof and his men, and he spoke a stave:

"Six men bale in Ellidi
And seven row, I see;

Battle-bold Fridthjof steers the ship,
For thus it seems to me."

And when he had emptied the horn of the drink he flung it in through the window frame, and he spoke to her who gave him to drink:

"Fair-stepping woman, take the horn
And lift it from the floor!
I drank it empty, and within
Remains no drinking more;
Upon the ocean I see folk
Faring storm-wearily;
Help they will need if they would reach
The haven from the sea."

There was a Jarl who heard what Hallvard said, and he asked news of him. Hallvard answered,

"There are men here who have come upon the land and they are greatly forwearied, and I think they are good warriors. And one of them is so valiant that he is carrying the others ashore." Then said the Jarl,

"Go down to meet them and greet them honorably if that be Fridthjof, son of Thorstein the chief, my friend; he is very famous in all his feats." Then a man spoke who was hight Atli, a great viking; and he said,

"Now we shall find out if it be true, as hath been said, that Fridthjof has vowed never to be the first to ask for peace." There were ten men together, ill folk and violent. They went about often as berserks.

When the parties came together they took to their arms. Then Atli said,

"It were well for thee, Fridthjof, to stand battle now, for eagles that meet fight with claws. And now it were well for thee to make good thy word, nor be the first to beg for truce." Fridthjof turned towards them and spoke a stave,

"We shall not be daunted by you,
Cowardly island men!
Rather than sue for peace with you
Alone I'd fight your ten!"

Then Hallvard came up and said, "The Jarl wills that all of you be made welcome, and there shall be no attack on you." Fridthjof said he was well-pleased with that, but they were prepared for either battle or peace.

After that they went to see the Jarl, and he received Fridthjof well, together with all his men, and they were with the Jarl that winter and were highly esteemed by him. He often asked them about their journey. Bjorn spoke a stave:

"For eighteen days we baled our ship
Together, warriors gay,
While over us fell on either side,
Like icy rain, the spray."

The Jarl said, "Somewhat too closely King Helgi hath trespassed on you, and it is ill with such kings, who are rulers for no other end than to destroy men with witchcraft."

"But I know," said Angantyr, "that thine errand hither, Fridthjof, is that thou wert sent for tribute, and I give a ready answer that King Helgi shall have no treasure of me. But thou shalt have as much goods as thou wilt, and thou mayest call it tribute if thou wilt; but otherwise, if it please thee."

Fridthjof said they would take the treasure.

VIII. Now it is to be said what befell in Norway after Fridthjof went away. The two brothers had the whole stead of Framness burnt. And while the two sisters were at their incantations they tumbled down from the magic house, and both their backs were broken.

That autumn King Hring came to Sogne to celebrate his

wedding, and there was a splendid marriage feast for him and Ingebjorg. He asked Ingebjorg,

"Whence comes this goodly ring thou hast on thy hand?" She said her father had had it.

The King said: "That ring is Fridthjof's; take it from thy hand, for thou shall have no lack of gold when thou comest to Alpheim." Then she gave the ring to Helgi's wife and bade her give it to Fridthjof, when he came back. Then King Hring went home with his wife, and he set great love upon her.

IX. In the spring following Fridthjof departed from the Orkney Isles, and he and Angantyr separated on very friendly terms. Hallvard went with Fridthjof. But when he came to Norway he learnt that his stead was burnt; and when Fridthjof came to Framness he said, "The homestead is turned black; and it was not friends that were at work here"; and he spoke a stave:

"Here in the stead upon Framness
We harbored heroes bold,
My father feasted them right well
In former days of old.
Now Framness-stead hath been burnt down
To ashes, as I see;
Ill is the payment those two kings
Must soon receive from me."

Then he sought council of his men about what should be done, and they bade him see to it. But he declared that they would first have to pay out the treasure.

Then they rowed over the ford to Systrand, and they heard that the Kings were at Baldr's Close making sacrifice. Bjorn and Fridthjof went up thither, and he bade Hallvard and Asmund to break holes in every ship, large or small, that was near by; and so they did.

Thereafter Fridthjof and Bjorn went up to the gate of Baldr's Close. Fridthjof wished to go in. Bjorn bade

him go warily, since he wished to go in alone. Fridthjof told him to wait outside and hold watch, and he spoke a stave:

"Alone I will go and seek those kings
(Little the help I need);
Cast fire in the hall if I come not back
By even-tide, I rede."

Bjorn said, "That is well spoken."

Then Fridthjof went in and saw that few folk were in the hall of sacrifice. The Kings were making offering, and they sat there to drink. There was fire on the floor, and their wives sat there by it and warmed the gods, and some of them anointed and dried them.

Fridthjof went before King Helgi and said, "Now thou wilt be wishing to have thy tribute." He lifted up the money bag that the silver was in, and cast it at his nose, so that two teeth fell from him and he himself tumbled from his high-seat unconscious. But Halfdan seized him, so that he did not fall into the fire. Then Fridthjof spoke a stave:

"Take thou this tribute with thy teeth,
O prince, unless thou wilt have more;
Silver have Bjorn and I both brought,
In the depth of this bag a mighty store."

There were few men in the room, for most of them were drinking elsewhere. But as Fridthjof walked through the hall towards the door he saw the goodly ring on the hand of Helgi's wife, as she was warming Baldr by the fire. Fridthjof grasped at the ring, but it was fast on her hand, and he drew her out of the hall by the door. But Baldr fell from her hands into the fire where she had warmed him. The fire flared up on both idols, for the two had been anointed, and so up on the roof, so that the whole house was afire. Fridthjof got the ring before he went out.

Then Bjorn asked what tidings he had to tell of his entrance, but Fridthjof held up the ring and spoke a stave:

"The gold-bag smote on Helgi's nose,
Giving a mighty blow:
Down from his high-seat Halfan's son,
The rascal, sank down low.
The ring I seized while Baldr burnt
And grasped it in my hands;
Thereafter swiftly I snatched up
From the fire some burning brands."

Men say that Fridthjof hurled burning brands on the birch thatch, so that the whole house burnt; and he spoke a stave:

"Depart we now—we must hold rede—
Down by the shore of the sea;
For in Baldr's Close the murky flames
Are burning furiously."

Thereafter they went to the sea.

X. When King Helgi came to his senses, he bade men pursue Fridthjof with all speed and kill him and all his companions. "That man has so misdone that he spared no sanctuary." The King's men were summoned; when they came out by the hall they saw that it was aflame. Halfdan went thither with some of the men. They were now aboard ship, and letting it fare freely about. King Helgi and his men found that all their ships were injured, and so they were forced to land again, and some of their men died. King Helgi was so wrathful that he was quite swollen with anger. He drew his bow and set an arrow on the string and thought to shoot at Fridthjof, but he pulled it with so great force that both bow-tips snapped asunder. But when Fridthjof saw that, he seized two oars of Ellidi and dipped them so hard that both of them broke; and he spoke a stave:

"In Baldr's Close I kissed Ingebjorg,
Beli's daughter, the young:

Now let the oars of Ellidi burst
As Helgi's bow hath sprung."

After that the wind sprang up from behind over the fjord. They put up their sails and went away. And Fridthjof told them that they would have to make preparations to go, and that they might not tarry for long there. Then they sailed out from Sogne. Fridthjof spoke a stave:

"Now we have sailed out from Sogne,
As we once sailed before;
That time the fire mounted high up
Out of our homestead, of yore:
But this time bale-flames ravish
The midst of Baldr's Close;
For this I must go an exile's way,
Such doom they will impose."

Bjorn said, "What shall we do now, brother?"

"I may not tarry here in Norway. I desire to know the ways of fighting men and go abroad as viking." Then they explored the islands and distant skerries during the summer, and they earned both riches and fame. But in the fall they went to the Orkneys, and Angantyr received them well, and there they abode that winter.

But when Fridthjof was gone from Norway, the Kings held a Thing and proclaimed Fridthjof an outlaw from their realm, and they took over all his possessions. King Halfdan settled at Framness and built up again so much of the stead as was burnt. And likewise they rebuilt Baldr's Close; but it was a long time before that fire was slaked. It seemed worst of all to King Helgi that the idols were burnt. It was a great expense before Baldr's Close was built up again quite as it was before. King Helgi abode now at Systrand.

XI. Fridthjof enjoyed great wealth and respect wherever he went. He killed evil men and savage vikings, but he let

merchants and husbandmen go in peace. So he was called anew Fridthjof the Bold. He had gathered about him a large and able band of men, and he himself had grown very rich in chattels.

But when Fridthjof had been a viking for three winters, he went east and landed at Vik. Then he said he wished to go ashore, "but ye shall go a-harrying this winter, for I begin to weary of it. I shall go into the Upland and visit King Hring. But ye shall meet me here in the summer, for I shall be here on the first day of summer." Bjorn said,

"This is not wisely done, but thou wilt do thine own will. I would wish that we might go north to Sogne and kill the two Kings, Helgi and Halfdan." Fridthjof answered,

"That would do no good: rather would I go to see Hring and Ingebjorg." Bjorn said,

"I am unwilling to let thee risk thyself in his power, for Hring is high-born and wise, though he be somewhat advanced in years."

Fridthjof said he would manage that, "and thou, Bjorn, shalt manage my men." They did as he said.

Fridthjof went into the Upland in the fall, for he was curious about the love of King Hring and Ingebjorg. But before he came there he dressed in a great cape over his other clothing, and he was very shaggy. He carried two staves in his hands and had a hood over his face, and made himself look as old as might be.

Then he met herdsmen and asked them, "Whence come ye?" They answered,

"We dwell in Streitland by the King's residence." The man asked them,

"Is Hring a wealthy King?" They answered,

"It appears to us that thou art old enough to know the position of King Hring in all respects." The man told them he knew more about boiling salt from sea-brine than about the ways of Kings. Then he went on to the hall, and at close of day he entered it and looked wearily about, and he took his place near the outside, pulled his hood

down, and hid his face. King Hring spoke to Ingebjorg, and said:

"A man hath come into the hall who is much taller than other men." The Queen answered,

"That is no great news here." Then he said to a serving man who stood by the board,

"Go thou and ask who he is, this muffled man, and whence he comes, or where are his kin." The boy ran out to the newcomer and said,

"Man, what is thy name? Where didst thou go by night, and where is thy kin?" The muffled man said,

"Thou askest more than one question, boy! Canst thou report it well if I give thee answer?" He said he could. Then the muffled man said,

"I am hight Thjof, I was with Wolf by night, and I was reared at Need-fjord." The boy ran before the King and told him the answer of the muffled man. The King said,

"Thou hast understood him well. I know the country called Need-fjord. It may be then the man is ill at ease. He seemed a wise man, worthy of esteem."

The Queen said it was strange conduct of his, "that thou desirest so eagerly to speak with every sort of person who comes here. But what is so worthy about him?" The King said,

"Thou knowest no more than I. I see that he thinks more than he says and that he has much understanding." Then the King sent for him, and the muffled man went in before the King holding himself rather bent, and he addressed him in a low voice. The King said,

"What is thy name, tall man?" The muffled man spoke and said a stave:

"When I went out with vikings, Frid-thjof was my name;
When I made widows weep, Her-thjof was my name;
When I hurled forth my spears, Geir-thjof was my name;
When I fought with the warriors, Gunn-thjof was my name;

When I robbed in the skerry, Ey-thjof was my name;
When I seized little children, Hel-thjof was my name;
When I beat other warriors, Val-thjof was my name,
Much with salt-makers have I fared before I hither came."

The King said: "From many things hast thou taken the name Thjof. But where wentest thou by night, and where is thy home?" The muffled man answered,

"I was reared at Need-fjord, my desire drove me hither, and home I have none." The King answered,

"It may be that thou wert reared up in need for a certain time and it may also be that thou wert reared up in peace. Thou must have been in the forest by night, for there is no husbandman near by who is called Wolf. But when thou sayest that thou hast no home, it may be that thou holdest it of little value beside thy desire to come hither." Then Ingebjorg said,

"Go forth, Thjof, and seek another lodging, or else the guest-house." The King said,

"I am old enough to be able to give my guests place here. Take off thy cowl, stranger, and sit at my other hand." The Queen said,

"Thou art acting like a foolish old man in putting beside thee one who fares with a beggar's staff." Thjof said,

"It is not fitting, Lord; and it were better not so, for as the Queen says, I am more used to salt-making from brine than sitting among courtiers." The King said to Ingebjorg:

"Do as I will, for I must have the control for this time." Thjof did off his cape; beneath it he was in a dark blue kirtle, and he had the goodly ring on his hand. He wore a wide silver belt about him, and a great wallet with bright silver coin therein, a sword girt at his side, and a great fur cap on his head which he wore close about his face, as if to spare his eyes.

"That is better done," said the King. "And thou, O

Queen, shalt give him a goodly cloak and treat him fittingly." The Queen said,

"It shall be as thou sayest, Lord, but I care little for thy Thjof." Thereafter a goodly cloak was given to him, and he sat him down on the high-seat beside the King.

The Queen waxed dark-red when she saw the goodly ring, but she wished to exchange no words with him. But the King bore him merrily towards him, and he said,

"Thou hast a goodly ring on thy hand, and a long time it must be that thou hast been making salt of brine." He said,

"That is a heritage from my father."

"It may be," said the King, "that thou hast more than that one, unless old age weighs too heavily on my eyes; and there are few brine-burners who are thy like."

Thjof abode there that winter in great honor, and he was highly esteemed by all men. He was generous with his goods and friendly toward all men. The Queen spoke little with him, but the King was very blithe towards him.

It is now told that one time King Hring was to go to a feast with the Queen and a great following. The King said to Thjof: "Wilt thou go with us or stay home?" He said he would go along. "That pleases me the more," said the King.

Then they departed, and they had to go over a certain water. Thjof said to the King: "Methinks the ice is not to be trusted and the passage would not be safe." The King said,

"It is often to be noticed that thou thinkest well in our behalf."

A little later all the ice broke in. Thjof ran up and snatched back the wagon and all that were in it. Both the King and the Queen sat in it. All this Thjof snatched up on the ice, and the horse also, that was harnessed to the wagon. King Hring said,

"That was well pulled, Thjof; Fridthjof the Bold might not have done it more mightily if he had been here; and

such are the boldest fighting men." Now they came to the feast, which was uneventful; and the King went home with worthy gifts.

The depth of winter was now past; and the weather began to be better as it turned to spring, and the woods waxed green and the grass grew, and ships might fare freely from land to land.

XII. One day it chanced that the King spoke to his followers and said, "Now I desire that ye go out in the woods with me this day for our pleasure to see the fairness of the land." And they did so. A great number of men went out into the forest with the King.

It so happened that Fridthjof and the King were left alone together in the forest, far from other men. The King said that he was weary, "and I shall go to sleep." Thjof answered,

"Go home, Lord, for that is more fitting for a nobleman than to lie down out of doors." The King said,

"I do not wish it." Then he lay down and fell fast asleep and snored aloud. Thjof sat by him, and he drew his sword out of its sheath and cast it far from him. A little later the King arose and said,

"Is it not true, Fridthjof, that many thoughts came into thy mind, but thou didst decide thee happily? Now thou shalt be held here in great honor among us. I knew thee the first evening when thou didst come into our hall. Thou must not leave us hastily. Something great is surely fated for thee." Fridthjof said,

"Thou hast treated me well, Lord, and in friendly wise, but I must go away soon, for my followers will come anon to meet me, as I arranged with them."

Then they rode home from the wood. The King's men joined them. Thereafter they journeyed to the hall and received good drink. Then it was known among all folk that Fridthjof the Bold had been there all winter.

Early one morning there was a blow on the door of the

hall in which the King and Queen slept, and many others also. The King asked who was knocking at the door. He who was outside answered,

"It is Fridthjof; and I am now ready to depart." Then the door was opened and Fridthjof came in and spoke a stave:

"I am ready to go and give thee thanks;
Thou gavest me the best
Of friendly harborage when I came
And sought thee as thy guest.
Ever I'll think of Ingebjorg
(May she live ay in bliss!)
But the fate of us two is that we exchange
A jewel, but not a kiss."

Then he delivered the goodly ring to Ingebjorg and said that she should have it. The King smiled at this verse and said,

"It comes out, then, that she is better thanked for thy winter here than am I, yet she was not as friendly to thee as I."

Then the King sent his serving men to fetch food and drink, and he said that they should eat and drink before Fridthjof went away: "and do thou sit up, Queen, and be gay!" She said she had no mind to eat so early. The King said,

"We shall all eat together." And so they did.

And when they had drunk for a time, King Hring said, "I would that thou wert here, Fridthjof, for my sons are still but children, but I am old and unfitted to protect the land if a foe should attack the kingdom." Fridthjof said,

"Hring, best of princes, may thou live
A long and hearty life;
Though she and I may never meet,
Guard well thy land and wife!"

Then said King Hring:

"Fridthjof, fare not sadly away,
Who art of chieftains best,
For better I'll pay this jewel of thine
Than thou erewhile hast guessed."

And again he spoke:

"My lovely wife I give to Fridthjof the Bold,
And therewith all the riches that I now have and hold."

Fridthjof took it up and answered,

"Thy gift I might not rightly take from thee,
O King,
Unless in some great sickness thou wert perishing."

The King said, "I would not give it thee if I did not think that it were so. But I am ill, and I grant thee this marriage most readily, for thou art superior to all men in Norway. And I will give thee also the royal name, since her brothers would be less likely than I to do thee honor or to betroth her to thee." Fridthjof said,

"Many thanks to thee, O King, for thy goodness, which is greater than I expected! But I wish for no greater title than that of jarl."

Then King Hring pledged and gave over to Fridthjof the power over the kingdom that he had ruled, and therewith he gave him the title of jarl. Fridthjof was to see to it that Hring's sons were reared up to rule over his kingdom.

King Hring lay ill a short time, and when he died there was great sorrow for him in the realm. A mound was built for him and much treasure was put in according to his request. Then Fridthjof made a worshipful feast, and his men came to it. Then they drank together the funeral feast of King Hring and the wedding of Ingebjorg and Fridthjof. Thereafter Fridthjof ruled the kingdom and he was looked on as an excellent man. He and Ingebjorg had many children.

The two Kings at Sogne, the brothers of Ingebjorg, heard the tidings that Fridthjof had the royal power in Hring's realm and had married their sister. Helgi said to his brother Halfdan that that was a great wrong and impudence for a chieftain's son to marry her. They summoned many men and went out to Hring's realm and they planned to kill Fridthjof and subdue the whole kingdom for themselves.

But when Fridthjof was aware of this, he summoned his men and said to the Queen, "New strife has come upon our kingdom. However it may turn out, I do not wish it to cause coldness on thy part." She answered,

"It has come to this, that I hold thee dearest of all."

Bjorn had come east to join Fridthjof's band. Then they went into the fray. And it was still as before, that Fridthjof was foremost in that battle. He and King Helgi exchanged blows, and Fridthjof gave him his bane. Then Fridthjof caused the shield of peace to be held up, and so the battle was stopped.

Fridthjof said to King Halfdan, "A choice of two weighty things lies before thee: the one, to surrender everything into my power; the other, to share thy brother's bane. It seems that I have a better case than thou." Then Halfdan chose to subject himself and his kingdom to Fridthjof.

Fridthjof now took over the rule over the folk of Sogne, but Halfdan was to be chieftain there and yield tribute to Fridthjof so long as he ruled over Hring's realm. Fridthjof received the title of King over the folk of Sogne from the time when he yielded Hring's realm to the son of Hring, and thereafter he won Hardaland for himself. He had two sons, Gunnthjof and Hunthjof. They became very mighty men.

And here ends the saga of Fridthjof the Bold.

THE SAGA OF GUNNLAUG THE SNAKE-TONGUED

I. Of Helga's Parents, Thorstein and Jofrid

Thorstein was the name of a man; he was Egil's son, who was the son of Skallagrim, son of Kveldulf, son of a prince out of Norway; and the mother of Thorstein was hight Asgerd, and she was the daughter of Bjarn. Thorstein dwelt at Borg on Borgfirth; he was well-to-do and a man of great rank; he was prudent and gentle and modest in all things. In no wise was he an heroic person in growth and strength, like his father Egil, but yet he was an outstanding, excellent man, well beloved by all folk. Thorstein was a handsome man, with light hair and most beautiful eyes. He had to wife Jofrid the daughter of Gunnar Hlif's son. Jofrid was eighteen winters old when he wed her: she was then a widow, for Thorodd Tungu-Odd's son had married her before, and their daughter was Hungerda, who was reared up at Borg with Thorstein.

Jofrid was a very capable woman. She and Thorstein had many children, but with them the saga has little to do: Skuli was the eldest of their sons; the second was Kollsvein, and the third Egil.

II. Thorstein's Dream

One summer it is reported that a ship is come from the sea to the mouth of the Gufa; Bergfin was the name of the ship's pilot, a man of Norwegian family, wealthy and rather advanced in years: he was a prudent man. Master Thorstein rode down to the ship and had most of the say about where the chap-place should be, and so it was. The folk from Norway sought harborage for themselves, but

Thorstein took the pilot with him for that he asked it of him. Bergfin showed himself brief in his speech that winter, but Thorstein entertained him well.

The Norwegian took great pleasure in dreams. One day in spring Thorstein spoke with Bergfin and asked him if he wished to ride up with him under Valfell: at that place the men of Borgfirth had their Thing; and Thorstein had heard that his booth-walls had fallen in. The Easterner said he was fain to do it, and so they rode thence all day until they came to a stead that is hight Grenja's: a poor man dwelt there who was called Atli, a tenant of Thorstein's. Thorstein bade Atli to fare to work with them, and bear along a spade and hoe; and so he did. And when the three were come up under Valfell together to the booth-site they all set to work and restored the wall. The sun's heat was great and it waxed unbearable to Thorstein and the Norwegian; and when they had restored the wall, the two of them sat down in the booth-place and Thorstein fell asleep, and he was troubled in his sleep.

The Norwegian sat beside him and let him have his dream out, and when he awoke it had gone hard with him. The Norwegian asked what he had dreamed, that he was so troubled in his sleep. Thorstein answered, "There is no sense in dreams." And as they rode home at evening, the Norwegian again asked Thorstein what he had dreamed. Thorstein said, "If I tell thee this dream, thou shalt expound it for what it is." The Norwegian said he would try. Then spake Thorstein,

"I dreamed so that methought I was at home at Borg, out in front of the house door, and I beheld a swan up on the ridge of the house, very fair and lovely; and I thought 'twas mine, and that it appeared very good to me. Then I saw a great ern fly over from above the fell; he flew down and settled by the swan and chattered blithely with her, and methought she received it well. Then I saw that the ern had swarthy eyes and claws of iron; he seemed to me like a bold spirit. Next I saw another bird fly up from

the south; he came down to Borg and lit on the ridge of the house beside the swan, wishing to win her for himself. He too was a great ern. Soon it seemed to me that the ern who was first come waxed right wroth now that the other was come, and they fought long and fiercely, and I saw that both of them bled; and this was the end of their fight, that each of them drooped and fell from the house ridge, and both of them were dead. But the swan sat there still, troubled and sad. Then I saw a bird come flying from the west, which was a falcon. He settled down beside her and made her blithe cheer; and thereafter they flew away both together, and I awoke. But I think this dream is not without significance," said he, "and it stands for storms that come together from the quarters out of which methought the birds flew down." The Norwegian made this reply:

"It is not my belief," he said, "that it is so." Thorstein said,

"Make of my dream what seems most likely to thee, and let me hear it." The Norwegian said,

"The two birds must be the attendant sprites of two men: thy house-wife is now with child, and she will give birth to a fair and seemly maid, and you two shall love it greatly. And excellent men will court thy daughter, coming from the quarters thou didst think the birds flew from, and will bear great love to her; and they will fight for her, and both shall die of it. And after that the third man will woo her, coming from the quarter whence the falcon flew, and to him she will be wedded. Now have I reded thy dream, and I think it will fall out so." Thorstein answered:

"Ill is the dream expounded, and in unfriendly wise," he said, "and thou canst not rede them." The Norwegian answered,

"Thou wilt learn by experience how it falls out." Then Thorstein waxed cold towards the Norwegian, and he fared away in the summer, and so he is out of the saga.

III. Helga's Birth and Flight to Hjardarholt

In the summer Thorstein made ready to go to the Thing, and he said to his wife before he went away:

"It so happens," he says, "that thou art with child; and if thou givest birth to a girl-child, she shall be borne out and exposed, but if it is a boy, rear him up." For that was the custom, while the land was pagan, that poor men with many children let bear their infants out; and yet men thought that the thing was always ill-done. And when Thorstein had said this, Jofrid answered:

"That speech is not fitting for thee," she says, "considering thy position; and it will not seem right for thee to have this done, when thou art so well-off." Thorstein made answer,

"Thou knowest my nature," he said; "and things go not well if it is aroused."

Then he rode to the Thing. Jofrid gave birth to a very fair girl-child. The women wished to carry it to her, but she said there was little need of it; and she caused her herdsman to be summoned, who was called Thorvard, and she said to him:

"Take thou my horse and saddle it, and bear this child westwards to Thorgerda Egil's daughter in Hjardarholt, and bid her rear it up in secret, so that Thorstein knows nought of it. So tenderly I regard this babe that surely I can not bear to have it exposed. Here be three silver marks that thou shalt have in payment. And then Thorgerda shall give thee western passage and provisions for the sea."

Thorvard did as she said. He rode west to Hjardarholt with the child and gave it into Thorgerda's hands. She had a tenant of hers, who dwelt in on Leysingjastead on Hvansfirth, rear up the child. And she gave Thorvard passage north to Steingrimsfirth in Skeljavik, and provisions for a sea voyage. And he journeyed thence; and so he is out of the saga.

IV. Of the Feast at Hjardarholt, and How Thorstein Found Helga

When Thorstein came home from the Thing, Jofrid told him that the child was exposed, as he had said before, and that the herdsman had run away and stolen her horse. Thorstein said she had done well, and got him another herdsman.

Now six winters pass by, and nothing was known of the matter. Then Thorstein rode west to a feast in Hjardarholt at the house of Olaf the Peacock, his kinsman, son of Hauskuld, who was held to be a man of the greatest esteem among all the great men there in the west. Thorstein was well received, as was fitting. And it is said that one day of the feast Thorgerda sat talking with Thorstein her brother on the dais, for Olaf was holding speech with another man. Opposite them on the benches sat three maidens. Then Thorgerda said,

"What dost thou think, brother, of the maids that sit there opposite us?" He answered,

"Very highly," he says, "and there is one of them by far the fairest, who has the good looks of Olaf, but the fairness and features of us Myramen." Thorgerda replies,

"True it is, brother, as thou hast said, that she has the fairness and the features of us Myramen, but not that she has the good looks of Olaf the Peacock, for she is not his daughter."

"How may that be?" says Thorstein; "is she not thy daughter?" She answers,

"To tell thee truth, kinsman," she says, "that fair maid is thy daughter, not mine;" and therewith she told him all that had chanced, and asked him to forgive her and his wife for this wrong. Thorstein said,

"I cannot reproach you two for this, for naught can escape its fate. Ye two have well outwitted my foolishness. It seems to me now that there is great happiness in having a child as fair as this maid. And how is she called?"

"She is hight Helga," says Thorgerda.

"Helga the Fair," says Thorstein. "Now thou shalt make ready her journey home with me." And she did so.

Thorstein was sent away with rich gifts, and Helga rode home with him; and she was reared up there with great love and esteem by her father and mother and all her kin.

V. Gunnlaug's Parentage and Youth: His Dwelling at Borg

At that time Illugi the Black, son of Hallkell Hrosskell's son, dwelt up on Hvitarsida at Gilsback. Illugi's mother was Thurid the Dull, daughter of Gunnlaug the Snake-tongued. Illugi was the second greatest householder in Borgarfirth after Thorstein Egil's son. Illugi the Black was very well off; he was a stern man, but he gave good support to a friend. He was wedded to Ingebjorg the daughter of Asbjorn Hard's son of Ornolfsdale. The mother of Ingebjorg was Thorgerda, daughter of Skegg of Midfirth. Ingebjorg and Illugi had many children, but few of them come into this saga. One of their sons was hight Hermund, another Gunnlaug. Both were promising men, and then in their prime. It is said of Gunnlaug that he developed very early, tall and strong; he had light-brown hair and was well demeaned; he had black eyes, a somewhat ugly nose, an agreeable face, a slender middle and broad shoulders: a man in good estate, very self-assertive by nature, covetous of honor, and unbending; a great poet and composer of mocking verses. He was called Gunnlaug the Snake-tongued. Hermund was the more popular, and had a courtly bearing.

When Gunnlaug was twelve winters old, he asked his father for the wherewithal to journey, and said he would fare out and see the customs of other men. Illugi the Husbandman hesitated about this: he said he would not cut a good figure abroad, since he seemed scarce able to maintain at home the state of affairs that he wished.

On a certain morning not long after this Illugi the Hus-

bandman went out early and saw that his out-bower was open, and ware-sacks were laid out, six of them, and also horses' robes. He was much amazed at this. Then a man came along leading four horses, and it was Gunnlaug his son, who said,

"I have carried out the sacks," quoth he. Illugi asked him why he did so. He said that they would serve for his journey. Illugi said,

"No support shalt thou have of me, and thou shalt go no farther than I wish," and he pulled the ware-sacks in again.

Then Gunnlaug rode away, and about evening he came up at Borg; and Thorstein the Husbandman bade him stay there, and he accepted. Gunnlaug told Thorstein what had passed between him and his father. Thorstein bade him remain there for the time if he wished. So he abode there a year and received knowledge of the law from Thorstein, and all men thought well of him. He and Helga often entertained themselves at chess together: they were very quickly inclined to each other, as it turned out later. They were much the same age. Helga was so fair, that it was the saying of wise men that she was the fairest woman in Iceland. She had so much hair that it might cover her entirely, and it was as bright as gold; and there was no match like Helga the Fair in all Borgarfirth or anywhere beyond.

One day, while men were sitting in the dwelling room at Borg, Gunnlaug said to Thorstein,

"There is one case at law that thou hast not taught me; how to betroth me a wife." Thorstein said,

"That is but a small case;" and he made known to him the procedure. Then Gunnlaug said,

"Now thou shalt test whether I have understood: I shall take thy hand and make as if I were plighting troth with thy daughter Helga." Thorstein said,

"I think that is needless," quoth he. But Gunnlaug grasped his hand and said,

"Grant it me."

"Do as thou wilt," says Thorstein; "but these folk who stand by shall know that it shall be as if it had never been said, and there shall be no secret reservation to follow it."

Then Gunnlaug named his witnesses and betrothed Helga to himself, and he asked then whether that might be of some use. He said it might be so; and the men who were present had great game of it.

VI. Noble Families of South-West Iceland; Hrafn the Skald

Onund was the name of a man who dwelt in the South by Mossfell. He was very prosperous, and he held the priesthood for the South-land about the ness. He was a wedded man, and his wife was hight Geirny, daughter of Gnup son of Molda-Gnup who settled in the South at Grindavik. Their sons were Hrafn and Thorarin and Eindrid. They were all promising men, but Hrafn was ahead of them in everything. He was a great man and a mighty, most handsome of men and a good skald. And when he was full grown he journeyed into the mid-land, and was well received wherever he came.

At that time there dwelt in the South at Hjall in Olfus Thorodd the Wise, son of Eyvind, and Skapti his son, who was then the law-giver in Iceland. The mother of Skapti was Rannveig daughter of Gnup son of Molda-Gnup, so that Skapti and the sons of Onund were sisters' sons. There was great friendship among the relatives.

At that time Thorfin Selthor's son dwelt out on Raudamel, and he had seven sons, all of them promising men. Three of them were called Thorgils, Eyjolf, and Thorir, and they were the greatest men in those parts. And all of these men that are here named, were living at the same time.

VII. Gunnlaug Woos Helga

The next thing was that the best thing came to pass that ever chanced in all Iceland, for the land became all

Christian, and all folk renounced their former faith. Gunnlaug the Snake-Tongued, who was spoken of before, was sometimes at Borg with Thorstein, and sometimes at home with his father Illugi in Gilsback, for six winters. He was now eighteen years old, and was a credit to himself and his father.

There was a man hight Thorkell the Black. He was a house-carl of Illugi, near of kin, and had grown up there. A heritage fell to him in the North on the Vatnsdale River at As, and he asked Gunnlaug to go along with him. He did so, and the two rode north together to As, and they paid out the money which they had in keeping, with the help of Gunnlaug. And as they rode north they stayed as guests with a rich husbandman who lived at Grimstung. And in the morning the cattle-tender took Gunnlaug's horse and rode it, and it was covered with sweat when they received it. Gunnlaug struck the herdsman unconscious. The husbandman was unwilling to have it so, and expected payment for it. Gunnlaug offered to give a mark to him, but the husbandman thought that too little. Then Gunnlaug spake a verse:

"I offered to a petty man
A gray ring-silver mark;
Gold-spending man, thou shouldst receive
This hoard of dragons dark:
Thou shalt repent it if thou fail
To take it to thee—hark!"

The settlement was made as Gunnlaug offered, and they rode home to the south with the matter resting so.

A little later Gunnlaug asked his father for the wherewithal for a journey a second time. Illugi says:

"It shall now be as thou wilt," quoth he: "thou art now more fitting thereto than formerly." Then Illugi fared quickly away from home, and from Audun the Dog he bought for Gunnlaug the half share of a ship that stood up

at the mouth of the Gufa. . . . And when Illugi came home, Gunnlaug gave him much thanks.

Thorkell the Black decided to go with Gunnlaug, and so their wares were brought down to the ship. But Gunnlaug was at Borg while they made ready the ship, and he thought it merrier to speak with Helga than to be at work with merchantmen. One day Thorstein asked Gunnlaug if he would ride by horse with him up to Langvatnsdale. Gunnlaug said he would.

Now the two of them rode together until they came to Thorstein's summer cattle-sheds called Thorsteinstead, and there were certain horses which Thorstein had, four together, and they were red in color. The stallion was very handsome and as yet but little tested. Thorstein offered to give it to Gunnlaug, but he said he had no need of a horse since he intended to leave the country. Then they rode to another herd of horses. There was a gray stallion with four mares, the best in all Borgfirth, and Thorstein invited Gunnlaug to take it. He answered:

"I do not want this rather than the other; but why dost thou not offer to give me the thing I desire?"

"What is that?" asked Thorstein. Gunnlaug said,

"Helga the Fair, thy daughter," Thorstein answered,

"That may not be so quickly decided," and he spoke of other things; and they rode on the homeward way along the Langa. Then said Gunnlaug,

"I wish to know whether thou wilt make answer to my wooing." Thorstein answered,

"I may not be troubled by thy foolish speech." Gunnlaug said.

"It is my serious intent, and no foolish speech; and thou must know how thou wilt answer." Thorstein said,

"Thou shouldst first know what thou wilt. Art thou not all in readiness to go abroad? And dost thou act now as if thou wouldst wed? That would be no equal match between Helga and thee, when thou art so undecided; and it may not come to pass at all." Gunnlaug said,

"What is thy plan concerning thy daughter's marriage, if thou wilt not wed her to the son of Illugi the Black? Who are the men in Borgfirth who are better conditioned than he?" Thorstein answered.

"I do not undertake a comparison of men; if thou wert such a man as thy father thou mightest not be denied." Gunnlaug said,

"To whom wouldst thou rather marry thy daughter than to me?" Thorstein answered,

"There is a great choice of good men here. Thorfin of Raudamel has seven sons, all of them excellent men." Gunnlaug replied,

"Neither Onund nor Thorfin is equal to my father, for clearly even thou fallest short of him. What canst thou offer against this, that he contested with Thorgrim the Good son of Kjalli at the Thorness Thing, and with his son, and he alone retained the thing they quarreled about?" Thorstein replied,

"I drove away Steinar son of Onund Sjoni, and that seemed a very great feat." Gunnlaug answered,

"Thereto thou hadst help of thy father Egil; moreover, it would serve very few husbandmen well, if they refused to be related to me." Thorstein said,

"They made use of force up there on the fell, but that will do thee no good out here at Myrar."

They came home about evening. And the next morning Gunnlaug rode up to Gilsback and bade his father ride out to Borg with him to woo him a wife. Illugi replied,

"Thou art an unsettled man: thou art decided to go abroad, and now thou dost behave as if thou wouldst be busied at wooing thee a wife; but I know that that is not in accord with Thorstein's nature." Gunnlaug answered,

"I intend to go just the same, and I shall not be pleased unless thou come with me." Then Illugi rode up to Borg with twelve men, and Thorstein received him well. Next day Illugi said to Thorstein.

"I wish to speak with thee." Thorstein answered,

"Let us go up on the hill and talk there." And so they did. Gunnlaug went with them. Then said Illugi:

"Gunnlaug my kinsman says that there hath been speech between you in his behalf for the wooing of thy daughter Helga. Now I wish to know how the matter is to stand. Thou knowest his family and our property; and I shall spare nothing on my part, neither settled dwelling place nor numbers of men, if it is brought nearer than before." Thorstein answered,

"I find this fault alone in thy son Gunnlaug, that he is undecided, but if he had a nature like thine, I would hesitate but little for that." Illugi answered,

"It must be the breaking of our friendship if thou refuse the two of us this equal match." Thorstein said,

"Because of thy word and our friendship Helga shall be Gunnlaug's pledged wife, but not betrothed; and she shall wait three winters. But Gunnlaug shall go abroad and shape himself according to the manners of worthy men. And I shall be freed of all agreements if he come not back, or if his character please me not." And therewith they parted.

Illugi rode home and Gunnlaug to the ship. And when they had a favoring wind they set out to sea, and they came by ship to Norway and sailed in behind Thrandheim to Nidaross, and they lay there at anchor and unloaded their wares.

VIII. Gunnlaug Visits Earl Eric of Norway

At that time there ruled in Norway Earl Eric son of Hakon, and his brother Svein. Earl Eric had his abode at Lade in his father's heritage, and he was a mighty chieftain. Skuli Thorstein's son was there with the Earl; he was a follower of his, and was well thought of. It is told that Gunnlaug and Audun the Dog went in to Lade with twelve men. Gunnlaug was so clad that he wore a gray kirtle and white hose. He had a boil on his foot down by the ankle, and blood and matter gushed out as he walked. And in this

semblance he went before the Earl, he and Audun and the others, and they gave him fair greeting. The Earl knew Audun and asked him tidings of Iceland, whereat Audun told him how things stood. The Earl asked Gunnlaug who he was, and he told him his name and family. The Earl said,

"Skuli Thorstein's son, what sort of man is this in Iceland?"

"Lord," he said, "greet him well, for he is the son of the best man in Iceland, Illugi the Black of Gilsback, and a foster brother of mine." The Earl said,

"What ails thy foot, Icelander?" Gunnlaug answers,

"There is a boil on it, Lord," he said.

"And dost thou not go halt with it?" says the Earl. Gunnlaug answers,

"I shall not go halt, so long as both feet are of even length." Then said a follower of the Earl's who was hight Thorir:

"He boasts much, this Icelander, and it would be well if we tested him." Gunnlaug looked at him and quoth:

"There is a henchman here who is
A man of evil will:
Trust in him not, for he is made
Black of hue, and ill."

Then Thorir wished to grasp his ax. The Earl spoke:

"Gently, gently," he said. "Men should give no heed to such things. But how old art thou, Icelander?" Gunnlaug answered,

"I am eighteen winters old," he said.

"I surmise from thy speech," says the Earl, "that thou wilt not become eighteen more." Gunnlaug spoke rather quietly;

"Put no curses on me," he said, "but rather on thyself." The Earl said,

"What art thou saying now, Icelander?" Gunnlaug answered,

"As it seemed fitting to me that thou shouldst put no wish-curses on me, but rather useful wishes on thyself."

"What ones?" said the Earl.

"That thou die not such a death as Hakon thy father." The Earl turned as red as blood and bade them seize that fool with all speed. Then Skuli came before the Earl and said,

"Do after my advice, Lord: let the man have mercy, and let him go away." The Earl said,

"Let him take himself off as fast as possible, if he wishes to go in peace; and let him never again come into my realm." Then Skuli went out with Gunnlaug and up on the quay. There was a passage for England, all ready for departure; and Skuli gave Gunnlaug passage, and also to Thorkatl, his kinsman. But Gunnlaug made over into Audun's keeping his ship and all the money he did not take with him.

So Gunnlaug and Thorkatl sailed to the waters of England, and about the harvest time they came to London port; and there they worked the landing-roll of their ship.

IX. Gunnlaug and Athelred of England

At that time there ruled over England King Athelred son of Eadgar, and he was a good chieftain. That winter he had his seat in London. . . . Gunlaug went at once before the King and gave him fair and worthy greeting. The King asked him from what land he came. Gunnlaug told him.

"And I have sought this meeting with thee, Lord, because I have made a verse concerning thee, and I wished thee to hear it." The King said that it should be so. Gunnlaug recited the verse well and manfully, and this is the refrain of it:

"Now all men praise the English king,
The god-like prince; 'tis said
That mankind and the hero's race
Bow them to Athelred."

The King thanked him for the poem and gave him as skald's reward a scarlet mantle adorned with the best fur and a gold border down on the flap; and he made him one of his followers. Gunnlaug remained with him through the winter and was highly esteemed.

Early one morning Gunnlaug met three men in a certain street, and the leader of the others was called Thororm. He was a great man and strong; a person hard to deal with. He spoke:

"Northerner," he said, "give me some money as a loan." Gunnlaug answered,

"It would not be advisable to give one's money to an unknown man." He replied,

"I shall yield it thee on the day that is named."

"I will risk it then," says Gunnlaug. And thereupon he gave him the money. A little later Gunnlaug met the King and told him of the loan. The King answered:

"Thou hast had poor luck in this: he is the worst sort of man, a great robber and pirate: have naught to do with him, and I shall give thee an equal amount of money." Gunnlaug answered,

"It has gone ill with us, thy followers, if we must take from innocent men and let him have the possession of our goods; but it shall not be." A little later he met Thororm and he demanded his money of him. He, however, said he would not yield it. Then Gunnlaug quoth this stave:

" 'Tis ill-advised, O battle-man
To keep from me my gold;
In wronging me and in deceit
Thou hast been over-bold;
Hear how of old I have been hight—
Good reason for my fame—
I was called as a child by a fitting word,
And Snake-Tongue is my name!"

"Now I make an offer of settlement to thee," said Gunnlaug: "that thou either yield me my money or else go out

with me on a holmgang within a period of three days." The viking laughed and said,

"Never before has any man undertaken to challenge me to a holmgang, though many have been wronged at my hands; and I am ready for it." And with that he and Gunnlaug parted. Gunnlaug told the King how it had gone with them. He answered,

"This is an unexpected affair, for the man blunts all weapons. Now thou shalt follow my advice, Gunnlaug," quoth the King: "here is a sword that I will give thee, and therewith shalt thou fight,—but show him the one thou hadst before." Gunnlaug gave the King many thanks.

And when they were ready for the holmgang, Thororm asked what sword it was that he had. Gunnlaug showed it him and drew it forth, but he had a loop of rope about the hilt of the royal gift and he drew it into his hand. The Berserk said as he saw the sword,

"I have no fear of that sword," quoth he; and he struck at Gunnlaug with his sword and cut off a great piece of the shield. At once Gunnlaug struck back with the King's gift, but the Berserk stood before him uncovered, thinking that he had the same weapon that he showed him. But Gunnlaug gave him his death-blow then. The King thanked him for the deed, and from it he earned great fame, both in England and elsewhere.

In the spring, when ships fared from one land to another, Gunnlaug asked leave of King Athelred to set sail. The King asked him what he willed. Gunnlaug answered,

"I wish to carry out the things I have promised and intended to;" and he spoke this verse:

"I go to seek the distant courts
Of three kings, and of two
Great earls, for this I pledged
That I would surely do:
I shall not come again unless
It might some wise befall

That this gold-giving monarch should
Desire me, and should call."

"So it shall be, skald," said the King, and gave him a gold ring that weighed seven ounces. "And this shalt thou promise me," said the King, "to come back to me at the next harvest; for I do not wish to lose thee, because of thy cunning and thy bravery."

X. Gunnlaug Goes to King Sigtrygg of Dublin and to the Orkney Islands

Now Gunnlaug set sail with some merchants from England and went north to Dublin. There ruled King Sigtrygg Silken-Beard, son of Olaf Kvaran and Queen Kormlade; at that time he had ruled the kingdom but a short time. Gunnlaug went straight before the King and gave him fair and worthy greeting. The King received him honorably. Gunnlaug said,

"I have made a verse concerning thee, Lord, and I wish to have silence," The King said,

"No one hath yet done so much as to recite me a verse, and I shall assuredly hear it." Then Gunnlaug spoke his lay, and this was the refrain:

"With corpses Sigtrygg feeds
The wolves, that are witches steeds."

And this, therewith:

"I am skilled of speech and I know well
A man of royal kin
Hight Kvaran's son, and to his fame
My song I will begin.
To princely giving he is wont,
For generous is he;
The poet hopes that rings will not
Be yielded sparingly.

Now let the hero say
If he has heard a lay

So artfully composed:
Its rhyme is featly closed!"

The King thanked him for the lay and called his treasurer to him, and said:

"How shall I reward this verse?" He answered,

"What wouldst thou, Lord?" he asked.

"How would it be," says the King, "if I give him two merchant ships as guerdon?" The treasurer replied,

"That is over-much, Lord, for such a praise-song other Kings give a good jewel, a good sword, or a good ring of gold." Then the King gave him his garment of new scarlet stuff, a gold-bordered kirtle, a cloak adorned with fine skins, and a golden ring that weighed a mark. Gunnlaug thanked the King for the gifts and tarried there a short time, and then he journeyed to the Orkney Isles.

At that time Earl Sigurd Hlodvi's son ruled over the Orkneys. Gunnlaug addressed the Earl and said he had a lay to recite before him. The Earl said he wished to hear his verse, and said he was a man of great honor. Gunnlaug recited his lay; it was a short one, and well composed. The Earl gave him a great ax adorned with silver as skald's fee and invited him to remain there with him. Gunnlaug thanked him for gift and invitation alike, but said that he was about to go east to Sweden. He went aboard with some merchants that were sailing for Norway, and at harvest time they reached Vik by Konungahella. Thorkell his kinsman still accompanied him. At Konungahella they took a guide up into Western Geatland and they came to a market hight Skarar. An earl ruled there who was called Sigurd, a man rather advanced in years. Gunnlaug went before him and greeted him and said he had made a verse about him. The Earl yielded him silence, and Gunnlaug spake him a brief poem. The Earl thanked him and fee'd him well, and invited him to remain there with him through the winter.

Earl Sigurd had a great Yule feast. On the day before it,

twelve men came from the north out of Norway, messengers of Earl Eric, and arrived before Earl Sigurd with gifts. The Earl received them well and lodged them beside Gunnlaug for the Yule-tide.

They had great mirth at the feast. The Geats said that there was no greater Earl than Sigurd, but the Norwegians thought Earl Eric was by far the better man. They argued about this, and each side chose Gunnlaug as judge. Then Gunnlaug spoke this verse:

"Well have ye spoken, ye heroes of battle
Of the Earl who hath fared wide—
An excellent prince—and looked on the sea
In tempest and stormy tide:
But Eric the Earl is also great
Who fared victoriously,
And also beheld the storms from his ship,
The stallion of the sea."

Both sides were pleased with the judgment, but the Norwegians more than the others.

The messengers went away after Yule with the gifts that Earl Sigurd sent to Earl Eric. And now they told Eric of the judgment of Gunnlaug. The Earl thought that Gunnlaug had manifested good will and friendship towards him; and he let it be known that Gunnlaug should have peace and welcome in his realm. Later Gunnlaug heard what the Earl had said. Earl Sigurd gave Gunnlaug a man to guide him east to Tiundaland in Sweden, as he asked.

XI. Gunnlaug Visits Olaf of Sweden; Meeting with Hrafn

At that time King Olaf the Swede ruled over Sweden; he was the son of King Eric the Victorious and Sigrid the Ambitious, the daughter of Skoglar-Tosti. He was a wealthy and excellent prince, and fond of show. Gunnlaug came up to Upsala near by the Thing of the Swedes in the spring; and when he reached the royal presence, he addressed the King. He received him well and asked him who he was.

He said he was an Icelander. Now Hrafn Onund's son was there with the King, and he asked:

"Hrafn," quoth he, "what sort of man is this in Iceland?" The man stood up from the lowly bench—he was tall and bold—, went before the King, and spoke:

"Lord," he said, "he is of the very best family, and is himself a very brave man."

"Then let him go and sit beside thee," quoth the King. Gunnlaug said,

"I have made a verse to recite before thee, Lord; and I would that ye might hearken and yield me silence."

"Go first and be seated," said the King; "there is no time now to hearken to thy verses."

Then Gunnlaug and Hrafn spoke together, and each told the other about his journeyings. Hrafn said he had sailed to Norway from Iceland earlier, during the summer, but at the beginning of the winter from Norway to Sweden. They were on very good terms. And one day, when the Thing was over, both Gunnlaug and Hrafn were before the King. Then Gunnlaug spoke:

"Now I would, Lord," he said, "that thou shouldst hearken to the verse."

"Let it be so," says the King.

"And I too wish to recite my verse now," quoth Hrafn, "if it be thy will, Lord."

"Let it be so," says the King.

"Then I will speak mine first," said Gunnlaug, "if it is thy will."

"It is my place to recite first," said Hrafn, "since I came first before thee." Gunnlaug spoke:

"Where did it ever chance with our fathers that my father was a hanger-on of thine? Never at all. And it shall be the same with us." Hrafn answered,

"Let us use courtesy," he said, "so that our reciting may not be a scolding match; and let us have the King decide." The King said,

"Gunnlaug shall recite first, for he takes it ill if he does

not have his will." Then Gunnlaug spoke the praise-song that he had made for King Olaf. And when the lay was done the King said,

"Hrafn," quoth he, "how was the verse?"

"Well, Lord," he said; "it is puffed up and unlovely and somewhat harsh, as is the nature of Gunnlaug himself."

"Now thou shalt speak thy verse, Hrafn!" quoth the King. He did so; and when it was done the King spoke and asked:

"Gunnlaug," he said, "how was the verse done?" Gunnlaug answered,

"Well, Lord," he said; "it is a fair verse, like Hrafn himself,—and expressionless. But why madest thou a mere lay for the King?" he asked. "Didst thou not think him worthy of a praise-song?" Hrafn answered,

"Let us talk of this no longer," he said; "we may return to it at a later time." And so they broke off their speech together. A little later Hrafn was made a follower of King Olaf, and he asked leave for a departure. The King granted it. And when Hrafn was ready to go he spoke to Gunnlaug:

"Our friendship is now ended, for that thou didst wish to make mockery of me before the chieftains. From now on I shall do thee no less dishonor than thou didst wish to do me here."

"Thy threat troubles me not at all," says Gunnlaug; "and wherever we meet, I shall be found no less worthy than thou."

King Olaf presented Hrafn with fine gifts at the parting, and thereafter he journeyed away.

XII. Hrafn Woos Helga

In the spring Hrafn fared East: he came to Thrandheim and made ready his ship and sailed out to Iceland in the summer, and he came with his ship to Leiruvag north of Heide. Kinsmen and friends were rejoiced to see him, and he abode at home that winter with his father. That sum-

mer the two kinsmen Skapti the Lawgiver and Hrafn the Skald met at the Althing. Hrafn said,

"I wish thy help in a matter of wooing, for I desire to ask Thorstein Egil's son for his daughter Helga." Skapti answered,

"Is she not already the betrothed of Gunnlaug the Snake-Tongued?" Hrafn said,

"Has not the period of time passed that was agreed between them? Besides, his pride is now much too great for him to be concerned with this thing." Skapti answered,

"Let us do as thou likest." Then they went, with many attendants, to the booth of Thorstein Egil's son. He received them well. Skapti said:

"Hrafn, my kinsman, is of a mind to woo thy daughter Helga. Thou knowest his family, and the wealth of his goods and his followers, his strength in friends and kinsmen." Thorstein answered,

"She is already betrothed to Gunnlaug, and I will hold true to all agreements with him." Skapti said,

"Have not the three winters passed by that were agreed upon between you?" Thorstein said,

"The summer is not yet passed, and he may come out here before fall." Skapti answered,

"But if he does not come during the summer, what may we look forward to in the matter?" Thorstein replied,

"We may come here the next summer and see then what seems most advisable; but there is no use in talking now." And with that they parted and rode home from the Thing.

It did not remain a secret that Hrafn was wooing Helga. Gunnlaug did not come out that summer; and the next summer Skapti and his men forcefully laid down their request at the Althing, and said Thorstein was free of all promises to Gunnlaug. Thorstein answered:

"I have few daughters to care for, and I wish that this may be kept from becoming a feud. First of all I will visit Illugi the Black." And so he did. When they met, Thorstein said,

"Does it not appear that I am free of all promises made to Gunnlaug, thy son?" Illugi answered,

"So it is surely," he said, "if thou wilt. And I can give thee little advice, since I do not know precisely the affairs of my son Gunnlaug." Then Thorstein went to Skapti, and they so arranged it that the wedding should take place in mid-October at Thorstein's stead in Borg if Gunnlaug did not arrive; but that Thorstein should be free of all promises to Hrafn if Gunnlaug did come to redeem his promise. After that men rode away from the Thing. The return of Gunnlaug was delayed, but Helga was little pleased with the marriage.

XIII. Gunnlaug in England Again; Journey to Norway and Return to Iceland

Now it is to be said of Gunnlaug that he left Sweden that summer for England, when Hrafn went to Iceland; and he received fine gifts from Olaf at his parting. King Athelred received Gunnlaug well, and he abode with him in all honor throughout the winter.

At that time there reigned in Denmark King Knut son of Svein, who was newly come into his heritage; and he threatened to make a raid on England for that King Svein, his father, had won a great kingdom in England before he died in those same western parts. And in that time there was a great army of Danish men, with a chief in command of it who hight Heming, son of Strut-Harald and brother of Earl Sigvald; and under King Knut he held the Kingdom that Svein had conquered.

In the spring Gunnlaug asked the King's leave to depart. He said,

"It is not fitting for thee to go away and leave me at a time of such warfare as now faces us here in England, since thou art a follower of mine." Gunnlaug answered,

"Thou shalt decide the matter, my Lord! But give me leave to go in the summer, if the Danes do not come." The King said,

"Let it be so between us!"

So that summer went by, and the winter following, and the Danes did not come. And after midsummer Gunnlaug took leave and fared east to Norway, where he visited Earl Eric in Thrandheim at Lade. The Earl received him well and asked him to stay with him. Gunnlaug thanked the Earl for his invitation, but he said he had a pressing errand, to seek his promised bride. The Earl said,

"All of the ships have now gone, that intend to go to Iceland." Then one of the thanes said,

"Hallfred the Hard-Skald was lying out there under Agdaness yesterday." Then the Earl said,

"That may be; he sailed from here five nights ago." Then Earl Eric had Gunnlaug taken out to Hallfred, and he received him gladly. That was late in the summer, and straightway they had a favoring wind from the land, and they were greatly rejoiced. Hallfred said to Gunnlaug,

"Hast thou heard that Hrafn Onund's son has wooed Helga the Fair?" Gunnlaug said he had heard of it, but not precisely. Thereat Hallfred told what he knew of it, and added that many men said that Hrafn was not less doughty than Gunnlaug. Gunnlaug spoke this verse:

"The wind blows gently over the land
And yet I should not care
If a storm from the East played with the ship
As she set out to fare:
More it concerns me that I am thought
No equal of Hrafn's, or mate:
But the spender-of-gold shall not abide
To make his proof too late."

Then Hallfred said,

"It is to be hoped, my friend, that thy affair with Hrafn goes better than did mine. Five winters ago I came in my ship to Leiruvag north of Heide, and I had to give over half a mark of silver to a house-carl of Hrafn's, but I kept it back; and Hrafn rode up with sixty men and cut the hawser

and pushed the ship up on the clayey soil and made it ready for ship-wreck. I had to yield self-judgment to Hrafn, and I payed down a mark:—such are the things I have to tell of him." Then they spoke of Helga, and Hallfred praised her beauty greatly. Then Gunnlaug spoke this stave:

"The warrior over-cautious of scorn
May not win the maiden to be his mate:
The goddess of linen to him is forlorn,
For mine is a claim of elder date—
When we two were younger, I sat and played
With her fingers in mine, the gold-wearing maid."

"That is well composed," said Hallfred.

They landed in the north at Hraunhaven in Melrakkasletta half a month before winter, and landed their cargo.

Thord was the name of a man; he was the son of a husbandman there in Sletta. He often went wrestling with merchants, and they had ill luck with him. Then it came about that Gunnlaug was to wrestle with him. On the night before Thord prayed to Thor for victory. In the morning, when they wrestled, Gunnlaug struck both feet from under Thord and gave him a great fall. But the foot Gunnlaug was standing on slipped out of joint and he fell down with Thord. Then said Thord,

"There is another thing that may go no better with thee."

"What is that?" says Gunnlaug.

"The affair with Hrafn Onund's son, if he takes Helga the Fair as wife at mid-October. I was present at the Althing this summer, when it was settled." Gunnlaug made no answer. The foot was bound up and so that it went into joint, and it swelled up greatly.

Then Gunnlaug and Hallfred left Sletta a week before mid-October, twelve of them together, and reached Gilsback the Saturday evening of the wedding feast at Borg. Illugi was rejoiced to see Gunnlaug his son and his comrade. Gunnlaug said he wished to ride over to Borg. Illugi said that was not well-advised, and so it appeared to all but

Gunnlaug. But Gunnlaug might not move because of his foot, though he would not let it appear; and so nothing came of the journey.

In the morning Hallfred rode home to Hreduvatn in Northdale. Galti, his brother, had charge of his property there, and he was a doughty man.

XIV. Meeting of Gunnlaug and Helga; the Duel between Gunnlaug and Hrafn

Now it is to be said of Hrafn that he is sitting at his wedding-feast in Borg; and it was told by many men that the bride was more heavy-hearted than not. For the saw is true that one longs for that which one had in his youth; and so it went with her.

Then news went about that a man hight Sverting Hafr-Bjarns' son, who was the son of Molda-Gnup, was courting Hungerda, daughter of Thorodd and Jofrida; and the two of them were to be wedded during the winter, after Yuletide, up at Skaney. There dwelt Thorkell, Hungerda's kinsman, the son of Torfi Vallbrand's son. Torfi's mother was Thorodda, sister of Tungu-Odd.

Hrafn fared home to Mossfell with Helga, his wife. And when they had been there but a little time, it came to pass one morning before they arose, that Helga waked, but Hrafn slept still and bore him restlessly in his sleep. And when he awoke he told Helga what he had dreamt. Then Hrafn spoke a verse:

> "I dreamt I lay here stabbed at thy side
> And with my blood thy couch was red:
> The ale-bearing women could bind not my wound
> Nor comfort bring to Hrafn dead."

Helga said,

"Never will I weep for that: ye have all deceived me, and Gunnlaug must be come." And Helga cried much.

A little later men told of Gunnlaug's coming. Helga be-

haved so hard with Hrafn that he could not endure it there at home, and they went back again to Borg, and Hrafn had little good of their living together.

Now men were making themselves ready for the wedding feast in the winter. Thorkell of Skaney invited Illugi the Black and his son. And as Illugi the husbandman made ready, there sat Gunnlaug in the living room and prepared himself not a whit. Illugi went to him and said,

"Why dost thou not get thee ready, kinsman?" Gunnlaug answered,

"I do not intend to go." Illugi said,

"Thou shalt certainly go, kinsman! And do not take it so much to heart, as to be yearning thus after a woman. Make as though thou knewest it not: that is the manly way; and thou shalt never lack for a wife."

Gunnlaug did as his father said; and so men came to the feast. A place was made ready for Illugi and his son on the seat of honor, and for Thorstein Egil's son, his kinsman Hrafn, and the groom's man on the other seat opposite Illugi. The women were on their bench, and Helga the Fair sat by the bride. The two of them, Helga and Gunnlaug, looked often at each other, and it came about, as it is said, that the eyes remain not hidden if a woman loves a man. Gunnlaug was at that time well dressed, and he had on the fine clothes that King Sigtrygg gave him, and he seemed to surpass all other men in growth, strength, and beauty.

There was little joyousness at the feast. And on the day when they were making ready to depart, the women were moving about and preparing to leave for home. Gunnlaug went up to Helga and they talked together a long time. Then Gunnlaug spoke a verse:

"No day hath brought to the Snake-tongued joy
Under the heaven's span
Since Helga the Fair is called by the name
Of Hrafn, and since the man

Who is her father gave her for gold
And the promise-breaking began."

And again he spoke:

"Goddess of wine, I have small thanks to yield
To thy mother, nor yet thy sire:
Their daughter's fairness hath taken away
My joy in life entire;
Yet true it is that they begot
Together the lovely maid:
No fairer work of woman and man
Hath been in flesh arrayed."

Then Gunnlaug gave Helga the mantle which was Athelred's gift, a very great treasure. She thanked him well for the gift. After that Gunnlaug went out. A number of horses were come into the yard, and Gunnlaug leaped on the back of one of them and ran fiercely at the one before which Hrafn was standing, so that he had to back his horse.

"Why dost thou back, Hrafn," he said, "since now thou needest not fear me more; but thou knewest him thou hast dealt with." Then Hrafn spake a verse:

"It fits us little, warrior
Who art so famed in strife,
That we should fall a-quarreling
For the sake of any wife:
Many women just as fair
The sun looks down upon:
Bethink thee wisely, it were best
Thou doughty champion!"

Gunnlaug said,

"It may be that there are many such, but it does not seem so to me." Then Illugi and Thorstein sprang up, not wishing the two of them to fight. Then Gunnlaug spoke a verse:

"The lovely gold-wearing woman hath been
Yielded to Hrafn for pay,

Though I am esteemed his equal—no less,
As many speakers say;
This chanced while Athelred held me back
From journeying home from him;
Because he needed me in the fight
My joy in speech is dim."

After that the two rode home, and everything was peaceful and uneventful during the winter; and Hrafn had no good of his love towards Helga since she and Gunnlaug met.

And in the summer men rode in great numbers to the Thing: Illugi the Black and his sons Gunnlaug and Hermund; Thorstein Egil's son and Kollsvein his son, Onund of Mossfell and his sons, and Sverting Hafr-Bjarn's son. Skapti had the saying of the law at that time.

One day at the Thing while many men were going to the Hill of Laws, and the end had been reached of affairs to be decided by law, Gunnlaug asked for a hearing and said,

"Is Hrafn Onund's son here?" He said he was. Then Gunnlaug said, "Thou knowest thou hast taken my promised wife, and turned thee to enmity against me. For that I challenge thee, here at the Thing, to a holmgang three days hence on Oxarholm." Hrafn answered,

"That was well challenged, as was to be expected of thee, and I am quite ready whenever thou wilt."

The friends of both were ill-pleased with this; but it was a lawful deed for a man to challenge to a holmgang if he thought he had grievance from others. And when three nights had passed they made them ready for the holmgang, and Illugi the Black followed his son out to the island with many attendants, but Skapti the Law-giver followed Hrafn, and eke his father and all their kin. As Gunnlaug went out on the island he spoke this verse:

"Drawn is my sword, and I come forth
To the sand bank in the sea;
Ready for battle I fare, and pray
The gods to favor me;

With my sword I'll break in twain the head
Of Helga's love; I shall smite
The head from the body of that fell knave
And sunder it from him quite."

Hrafn answered and spoke a verse:

"The poet knows not which of us
Shall rejoice in victory;
This sword too is ready to smite
Into the bone of thee:
When the fight is done, though we be sore
And wounded grievously,
That woman fair, though widowed and old
Shall bravely hear of me."

Hermund, Gunnlaug's brother, held the shield for him, but Sverting Hafr-Bjarn's son did it for Hrafn. He who was wounded was to ransom himself with three marks of silver. Hrafn had the first blow since he was the one challenged; he smote on Gunnlaug's shield from above, and thereupon his sword broke asunder beneath the hilt, since the blow was given with great strength. The sword's point sprang up from the shield against Gunnlaug's chin, and gave him a slight wound. Then their kinsmen ran between them, and many other men besides. Gunnlaug said,

"Now I claim that Hrafn is beaten, for he is weaponless."

"And I claim that thou art beaten," says Hrafn, "since thou art wounded." Then Gunnlaug was madly wroth, and he said that it was not proved. Illugi his father said that they should make no further test. Gunnlaug said,

"I do desire, father, that Hrafn and I meet thus another time, when thou mayest not be there to separate us." And with that they parted for the time, and men went back to their booths.

And the next day after, the law was laid down in the assembly of the Althing, that holmgangs should be ended here in Iceland; and it was done by the Council of all the

wisest men who were there present: and all of the wisest men of the country were there then. The fight between Gunnlaug and Hrafn was the last holmgang carried out here in Iceland. . . .

When morning came, Gunnlaug and Hermund went out to the Oxa River and washed themselves. Just then many women came down to the water, and Helga the Fair was in the party. Hermund said to Gunnlaug:

"Doest thou see the women-folk, and Helga, thy friend, across the river?" Gunnlaug replied,

"Surely I see her;" and he spoke a verse:

"Born for strife was this woman, and yet
A warrior is to blame;
Great was my longing that I might have
For myself the golden dame;
Little my pleasure, though I gaze on the hand
Of the woman fair and wise;
For with pain my sight is blotted out;
There is darkness before my eyes."

Then they went across the river, and Helga and Gunnlaug talked together for a time. And as they were returning across the river Helga stood there and stared long after Gunnlaug. He spoke a verse:

"The linen-decked woman hath given a glance
That shone from the sky of her brow:
The doom of a man and woman it was,
For ill will befall them now."

After that men rode home from the Thing, and Gunnlaug abode at home in Gilsback. And one morning when he awoke, he found that all men had arisen, save that he was lying in bed. He was resting in the bed-bench of the closed bed-room. Then there came into the room twelve men all weaponed, and Hrafn Onund's son was come with them. Gunnlaug sprang up and seized his weapons. Then Hrafn said to Gunnlaug:

"Thou shalt in no wise be endangered;" he said; "but thou shalt now hear my errand hither. Thou didst challenge me to a holmgang this summer at the Althing, and it appeared to thee that it was not fully tried out. Now I wish to bid thee that we two fare out this summer and go out on a holm in Norway; our friends will not prevent it there." Gunnlaug answers,

"Do thou settle it, best of warriors! I accept the choice gladly; and here thou mayest have what hospitality thou wilt, Hrafn." Hrafn answers,

"That was well offered, but for the present we must ride away." And with that they parted. The kinsmen on both sides thought it a great ill; but they could not accomplish aught against their violence. Moreover, that thing was set down to happen, which now impended.

XV. Hrafn and Gunnlaug Depart for Norway

Now it is to be told of Hrafn, that he made ready his ship at Leiruvag. Two men were named to journey with him, sisters' sons of his father Onund: one was called Grim, and the other Olaf, both of them excellent men. All of Hrafn's kin thought it a great loss that he fared away. But he said that he had no good of Helga; that Gunnlaug had challenged him, and that one of them would have to fall by the other's hand. After that Hrafn sailed out to sea when the wind was favorable, and they arrived in their ship at Thrandheim, and he tarried there the winter. There was no news of Gunnlaug that winter, and there he awaited him through the summer. And the second winter he was in Thrandheim at the place hight Lifangr.

In the north at Sletta, Gunnlaug got him ready to go aboard with Hallfred, but they were very late in finishing the preparation. They sailed out to sea when the wind was favorable, and a little before winter they reached the Orkney Isles. Earl Sigurd Hlodvi's son ruled over the Isles: Gunnlaug went to him and abode there during the winter, and the Earl treated him with great honor. In the

spring the Earl made ready to go a-warring. Gunnlaug prepared to fare with him, and during the summer they harried far and wide in the Southern Isles and the Firths of Scotland, and had many combats; and Gunnlaug proved himself the readiest and boldest warrior and the hardiest thane wherever they went. Earl Sigurd returned early in the summer but Gunnlaug went on ship there with some merchants who were sailing to Norway, and Gunnlaug and the Earl parted in great friendship.

Gunnlaug fared north to Thrandheim at Lade to see Earl Eric and was there at the beginning of the winter. The Earl received him well and invited him to remain with him: this Gunnlaug accepted. The Earl had heard before of the fight with Hrafn, just as it fell out, and he proposed to Gunnlaug that they fight in his kingdom. Gunnlaug said he should decide the matter, and he abode there that winter, and was ever reserved. In the spring Gunnlaug went out one day, and Thorkell his kinsman with him. They went beyond the court where there was a circle of men before the walls, and within the circle were two armed men fighting: these two were likewise named Hrafn and Gunnlaug. The bystanders said that Icelanders were low-minded and slow to remember their word. Gunnlaug observed that great scorn followed hereafter, and there was much contempt and mockery involved. Gunnlaug went away in silence. And a short time afterwards he told the Earl that he would no longer suffer the scorn and mockery of his thanes concerning the affair of himself and Hrafn; and he asked the Earl to give him a guide to Lifangr. The Earl had been told before that Hrafn was gone from Lifangr and journeyed east to Sweden: he granted Gunnlaug leave to go and gave him two guides for his journey.

XVI. Combat between Gunnlaug and Hrafn; their Death

Now Gunnlaug departs from Lade for Lifangr with six men. And that morning Hrafn had departed with four men, before Gunnlaug arrived in the evening. Thence Gunn-

laug fared to Veradale, and arrived in the evening just after Hrafn had been there. Gunnlaug went on until he came to the highest dwelling in the dale, which is hight Sula; and Hrafn had departed thence in the morning. Gunnlaug did not delay his journey there, but went on at once in the night; and in the morning at dawn each of them saw the other. Hrafn had come to a spot where two waters meet, and between the waters were level fields hight Gleipnisvellir. And before one of the waters a small ness projected, called Dingness. Here Hrafn and his men stood their ground: they were five all told, and with Hrafn were his kinsmen Grim and Olaf. And when they met, Gunnlaug said,

"It is well that we have found each other." Hrafn said he would not blame that: "and it is for thee to choose now, whether thou wilt," quoth Hrafn, "that all of us fight, or we two." Gunnlaug said he was well-pleased, no matter which it were. Then Hrafn's kinsmen Grim and Olaf spoke together and said they did not wish to stand by while they were fighting. So said Thorkell the Black also, Gunnlaug's kinsmen. Then Gunnlaug said to the Earl's guides:

"Ye two shall sit here and help neither side, but give the report later concerning our encounter." And so they did.

Then all of them went and boldly made themselves ready. Grim and Olaf attacked Gunnlaug alone, and they fought valiantly, and this was the end of their combat, that he killed both of them, but was not wounded himself. Thord Kolbeinsson bears witness to it in the verse he made of Gunnlaug the Snake-tongued:

"Gunnlaug slew with his sharp sword
Fierce Olaf and bold Grim
Before he might reach Hrafn, or
Begin the fight with him;
Besweat with blood, he was the bane
Of three bold warriors keen:
The hero caused the fall of men,
Their death, and mickle teen."

Hrafn and Thorkell the Black, Gunnlaug's kinsman, attacked each other in the meantime, and Thorkell fell before Hrafn and gave up his life. And in the end, all of the companions of their journey fell. Then the two of them, Hrafn and Gunnlaug, fought with great blows in fearless attack, each against the other, and smote each other fiercely, without break. Gunnlaug had the sword which was Athelred's gift with him, the best of weapons. Finally he struck Hrafn a mighty blow with the sword upon Hrafn's foot. Yet Hrafn did not fall, but retreated to a tree-stump and leaned upon it. Then said Gunnlaug,

"Now thou art out of the fight, and I will combat no longer with thee, a maimed man." Hrafn answered,

"It is true," quoth he, "that my fate hath played with me sorely; but it would help me much if I might have something to drink." Gunnlaug replied,

"Do me no treachery if I bring thee water in my helmet."

"I shall not betray thee," said Hrafn. Then Gunnlaug went to a spring and fetched some of it in his helmet and brought it to Hrafn. But he reached out for it with his left hand, and with the right he smote at Gunnlaug's head with his sword, and gave him a great wound. Then said Gunnlaug,

"Foully didst thou deceive me, and shamefully hast thou done when I trusted thee." Hrafn answered,

"It is true," he said, "but it came to this, that I could not let thee have the embrace of Helga the Fair." And again they fought fiercely. And finally it was so ended that Gunnlaug conquered Hrafn, and there he lost his life. Then the Earl's guides came forward and bound up the wound on Gunnlaug's head. He sat and spoke this verse:

"Brave was the warrior Hrafn when he
  Battled against a foe;
And in this combat none the less
  He hath fought truly so;
Many a blow was given this day
  That on Dingness laid us low."

Then they buried the dead men, and after that they bore Gunnlaug with them on his horse until they came up to Lifangr. And there he lay three nights and received the ministrations of a priest and thereafter he died and was buried by the church. And all men thought it great scathe about the two of them, Gunnlaug and Hrafn, and the ending of their lives.

XVII. Dreams of Illugi and Onund; Illugi and Hermund Avenge Gunnlaug

In the summer before these tidings were told of in Iceland, Illugi the Black had a dream, and he was at that time at home in Gilsback. It seemed to him that Gunnlaug came to him in his sleep all bloody, and spoke this verse to him in the dream:

"Hrafn hath struck me; I know the weight
Of the blows that came from his brand;
But on Hrafn's leg too the keen edge bit
A wound that was wrought by my hand,
It was on the fen where warm wounds drip
And the eagle swoops for his prey
That Gunnlaug's head was cleft amain
By Hrafn's son, that day."

Illugi called to mind his dream when he awoke, and he told it to others. It so chanced that that same night, further south at Mossfell, Onund dreamed that Hrafn came to him all bloody and spoke this verse:

"The mighty hero wounded me
And both our swords were red:
Beyond the sea our blades were tried
In battle sore bestead;
I think the bloody bird of prey
Hath dipped in gore his head:
Eager for slaughter he hath crossed
A lake of blood outspread."

In the summer following Illugi spoke to Onund at the Law-hill of the Althing:

"What doest thou offer to make amends for my son," he said, "since thy son Hrafn broke faith with him?" Onund answered,

"I am in no wise bound," he said, "to make amends for him, much as I was grieved at their encounter. I shall ask of thee no amends for my son." Illugi answered,

"Then shall some kinsman of thine suffer for the deed, or one of thy family." And during the summer following the Thing, Illugi remained ever very sad.

In the autumn it was reported that Illugi rode away from Gilsback with thirty men and came to Mossfell early in the morning. Onund was going to church with his sons; but Illugi took two of his kinsmen, Bjorn and Thorgrim: he let kill Bjorn, but smote off the foot of Thorgrim. After that Illugi rode home, and there was no recompense for this from Onund.

Hermund Illugi's son had little joy thinking of his brother Gunnlaug, and thought him still unavenged, though this much were done.

There was a man hight Hrafn, a brother's son of Onund of Mossfell. He was a great seaman, and had a ship up in Hrutafjord. In the spring Hermund Illugi's son rode away from home alone northwards to Holtvard Heath and so on to Hrutafjord and out to Bordeyr to the merchant's ships. The traders were all equipped and ready. Hrafn the steersman was on the land, and many men with him. Hermund rode towards him and stuck him through with his spear, and then he rode away, and all of Hrafn's fellows stood there amazed. No amends were given for that slaying. And with this the dealings of Illugi the Black and Onund of Mossfell were ended.

XVIII. Further Lot of Helga; Her Death

Thorstein Egil's son gave his daughter Helga in marriage, after some time was past, to a man hight Thorkell

Hallkell's son. He dwelt out in Hraundale, and Helga went to keep his house, but she loved him little, for she never forgot Gunnlaug, though he were dead. Yet Thorkell was a brave man of himself and wealthy, and a great skald. They had children together, not a few. Thorarin was the name of a son of theirs, and Thorstein; and they had many other children.

It was the greatest delight of Helga to unfold the cloak that was Gunnlaug's gift, and gaze long upon it. And one time there came a great sickness into the homestead of Thorkell and Helga, and many were afflicted for a long time. Helga too was taken ill, but she did not go to bed. One Saturday eve Helga sat in the fire-house and leaned her head on the knee of Thorkell her husband; and she sent for the cloak that was Gunnlaug's gift. And when it was brought to her, she sat up and unrolled it before her and gazed upon it for a time. Then she fell over in the lap of her husband and was dead. Then Thorkell spoke this verse:

"Within my arms I have held in death
The body of my fair wife,
When God had taken away from her,
The linen-adorned, her life.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Now nought remains for the man, but this:
To suffer remaining woe."

Helga was taken to the church; but Thorkell dwelt there long time after her. And all folk thought the death of Helga a great event, as was to be expected. Herewith ends the saga.

CHANSONS DE GESTE

INTRODUCTION TO CHANSONS DE GESTE

Charlemagne, King of the Franks and first of the Holy Roman Emperors, was no less important for the history of medieval literature than for the destiny of political Europe. By whatever process it occurred (this is a matter of discussion among scholars), certain it is that by the mid-eleventh century Charlemagne was transformed into a legendary figure of epic grandeur and all but superhuman power, the center of a group of champions whose names have become synonymous with chivalrous achievement. Thus he appears to us in the *chansons de geste,* the heroic verse narratives in Old French, of which *The Song of Roland* is one of the oldest and the most famous. The earliest poems of the type are vigorous and concise; they deal chiefly with combats against the heathen and treachery which leads to great slaughter, only to be followed by ultimate victory for the Franks. Such, for instance, is the *Chanson de Guillaume,* which celebrates the grim combat of William of Orange, one of Charlemagne's peers, against the Saracens, and his death at their hands. It is a tale of blood and carnage, as are many others of the group. Some of the longer poems are concerned not with fights against the heathen, but feuds between Charlemagne and his own barons: these reflect the hostility with which the peers of France regarded the growing power of the royal family. Such are the long-sustained narratives of the feuds in *Ogier the Dane, Renaud de Montalban, Girard de Vienne,* and the *Four Sons of Aimon.* These tales are rich in deeds of heroism and endurance, in outbursts of passionate violence and anger, in acts of loyalty and revenge; but they are somewhat monotonous in style and plot.

Later, more romantic elements were introduced into the *chansons de geste,* in the shape of Saracen princesses (who are always ready to liberate handsome Christian knights from captivity, as in *Fierabrace* and the crusading tale *Baudoin de Sebourc*), exiled foundling princes, monsters and giants and fairies (as in *Huon de Bordeaux*), and persecuted heroines who endure exile for the sake

of their husbands (as in *Aiol*), or because those same husbands have too easily believed an accusation against them (as in *Florence de Rome* and *Theseus de Cologne*). The two poems translated here are not of this long-winded, fantastic type; they are shorter tales, in which the authors do not lose sight of their plots in a mass of irrelevant adventure. *The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne* is an excellent example of the rather broad humor which was often introduced into the most exalted heroic tradition; *Charles and Elegast* is a poem preserved in Middle Dutch, and particularly interesting because it shows throughout a distinctively Germanic tone. It is a version of the story of The Master Thief, which has been traced back in a similar form to Oriental antiquity. The adaptation of this theme to Germanic society and Carolingian legend is very ingenious.

A word about the form of the Old French poems. Unlike the Arthurian romances, the *chansons de geste* were composed in assonating groups of lines (called *laisses*), each line numbering ten syllables and having a caesura in the middle. The *laisses* were of varying length: in the earlier poems the average was twelve or fifteen lines, but in the later long poems they were very much expanded. The style, too, changed: whereas the earlier epics were vigorous and laconic, the later ones became prolix and weak.

The translation of the *Pilgrimage* is based on the edition by Eduard Koschwitz, Leipzig, 1900; that of *Carel ende Elegast* upon the text in Volume I of Georg Penon's *Nederlandsche Dichten Prozawerken*, Groningen, 1889, and on the edition by Kuiper, Amsterdam, 1891.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF CHARLEMAGNE TO JERUSALEM

I. On a day King Charles was at the minster of St. Denis. He hath made the sign of the cross on his head and taken his crown unto him; he hath girded on his sword with the pummel wrought of pure gold. Dukes were present there and noble lords; barons and knights. Charles the Emperor gazed upon his dame; she was crowned most comely and well. By the hand he took her and led her beneath an olive tree, where he addressed her right loudly:

"Dame," he said, "hast thou ever seen a king beneath Heaven whose crown and sword became him so well? With my sword I shall be conqueror over many cities more."

She was no sage dame; she replied foolhardily: "Emperor," quoth she, "this vaunting is too great: I know another who is more comely indeed when he weareth his crown among his knights: when he sets it upon his head, it becomes him better than thine."

When Charles the King heard this, he was very wroth; he was greatly troubled for the Franks who heard it. "Ha, dame, where is this King? Give me knowledge of him! Together we two shall wear our crowns on our heads: thy dear one and thy counsellors shall be there, and I shall summon my court of good knights. If the Franks bid me, I shall grant it. But if thou hast lied to me in this, thou shalt buy it dear: I will cut off thy head with my steel sword."

"Emperor," quoth she, "be not angry; he is richer indeed in goods, in gold and moneys, but not so good nor doughty a knight for to give blows in battle nor to pursue the enemy." When the Queen saw that Charles was wroth, she repented heartily; she wished to fall at his feet.

II. "Emperor," said she, "mercy, for the love of God! I am in truth thy wife, and I thought but to jest! I shall make amends if thou command it; I shall swear an oath or do penance: from the highest tower of Paris I shall cast myself down, by my faith, so that nothing more be said or thought to thy dishonor."

"Do not that," quoth Charles, "but name the King."

"Emperor," she replied, "that might never be done."

"By my head," quoth the Emperor, "thou shalt tell it me straightway, or I will smite off thy head."

III. Now the Queen perceives that she may not get herself out of the trap. Willingly would she let the matter be, but she dare not change. "Emperor," she said, "hold me not a fool: I have heard much of King Hugon the Strong, Emperor of Greece and Constantinople, who holdeth all of Persia as his own, even into Cappadocia. There is no knight so goodly as he, from here to Antioch. No baronage is like to his, save only thine."

IV. "By my head," quoth the King, "that remains to be seen! If this is a lie that thou hast told, thou shalt verily die! By my faith, thou hast angered me greatly; thou hast forfeited all my love and friendship. I believe thou wilt yet lose thy head for it, which shall fall on thy trunk. Have thou no doubt, dame, of my might. No end shall be made until I have seen him."

V. When the Emperor of France was crowned and had made his offering at the high altar, he betook him back to the hall in Paris; with him he led Roland and Oliver, and William of Orange and Naymes the Hardy, Ogier the Dane, Gerin and Berenger, the Archbishop Turpin, Ernalt and Aimer, Bernard de Brusban and Bertram the Strong, and a thousand knights of their kind, born of France. "Lords," said the Emperor, "hearken to me for a space. Ye shall go with me, if God please, into a distant realm, to seek Jerusalem, the country of Lord God. I would go and wor-

ship Holy Cross and the Sepulchre; thrice have I dreamed it, and I needs must go; and I shall seek besides a King of whom I have heard great speech. Ye shall lead with you six hundred camels laden with gold and silver, for to remain and dwell six years in that land. I shall not turn me home until I have found him."

VI. The Emperor of France caused his men to make them ready. Those who went with him he adorned nobly, and he gave them sufficient store of fine gold and silver. They bore no shields nor lances nor swords, but iron-tipped ashen spears and hanging wallets. The horses were shod afore and behind; the churls saddled the mules and sumpter-horses, and filled the chests with fine gold and silver, with vessels, moneys, and other supplies; throne-chairs they also carried, and tents of silk. At St. Denis's of France King Charles assumes his pilgrim's wallet, and Turpin blesses it right gently, and takes his own as well, and all the Franks too; and they mount their mules, which were strong and gentle-paced. From the city they issued forth and departed with all speed. Thus Charles goeth at the command of God, but the Queen remains behind weeping very sorrowfully.

The King rode on until he came to a great plain. He turned aside and called to Bertram: "See thou these gentle pilgrim-folk and companions on the march! Eighty thousand of them follow their leader. He who would conduct and govern them must needs be strong!"

VII. So the Emperor went on with his mighty fellowship, eighty thousand of them, with their chief before. They left behind France and crossed over Burgundy; they traversed Lorraine, Bavaria, and Hungary. The Emperor rideth through the midst of the forests of Croatia, and they enter into Greece; then they see the hills and mountains of Romany, and the Turks and Persians and all the hated folk yonder. They pass over the water of the great river hard by Lalice, and hasten into the land where God was

made martyr. They behold Jerusalem, the ancient town, on a fair clear day; they seek harborage and go to the minster. Here they make offerings and repair thereafter to their hostels.

VIII. Splendid was the gift that King Charles offered. He entered into a minster with a vault of painted marble, where within was an altar of Holy Pater Noster. Here God did once chant mass, and eke the apostles, and the twelve chairs abide there still, with the thirteenth in the midst, well closed and sealed. And Charles entered in with great joy in his heart. When he beheld that chair, he approached it; he sat down and reposed himself a while, and the twelve in the others, about and at his sides. Ere that no man sat in them, nor ever did thereafter.

Much cheer did Charles have of the great beauty there: he saw the clear colors painted on the minster, of martyrs and virgins and the images of saints, and the changes of the moon and the annual feasts, and the beasts of the field and the fishes of the sea. Proud was the countenance of Charles, and his head was uplifted. A Jew entered in and regarded him close; when he beheld King Charles, he began to tremble, for so exalted was that face that he dared not look on it. Very near he came to falling; and he turned and fled, and with the greatest speed he mounted the marble stairs of the Patriarch. He addressed him:

"Sire, come thou anon to the minster; make ready the baptismal water, for I will straightway have myself baptised and uplifted. Twelve barons I saw enter into the minster, and a thirteenth with them; never did I behold their like. Faith of mine, that same is God himself! He and the twelve apostles are come to visit thee!"

When the Patriarch heard this, he went out to make himself ready. He summoned his clerks, adorned in white vestments, and bade them regown themselves and wrap capes about them. With a great procession he went to the King. The Emperor beheld him and rose up to meet him;

he doffed his hat, and bowed low before him. They exchanged the kiss of peace and asked tidings of each other. Quoth the Patriarch,

"Sire, where is the land of thy birth? Ere this no man dared to enter into this minster but if I commanded or enjoined it."

"Sire, my name is Charles, and France is the land that bore me. Twelve kings I have conquered by my strength and my fellowship; the thirteenth, of whom I have heard tell, I am seeking now. For the love of God I came to Jerusalem; I am come to worship the Rood and Sepulchre." And the Patriarch said:

"Sire, a very worthy knight art thou: thou sittest in that same siege where God Himself sat, and Charles the Great thou art hight, above all crowned kings." Quoth the Emperor,

"God thank thee five-hundredfold! If it please thee, give me of thy holy relics to bear into France and glorify there." The Patriarch made answer:

"Thou shalt have a-plenty of them. Thou shalt receive anon the arm of St. Simeon, and the head of St. Lazarus I shall have fetched for thee, and some of the blood of St. Stephen, martyr for God." And for this Charles rendered him salutation and friendship.

X. Quoth the Patriarch, "Thou hast well done in that thou camest here to find God; the best of all things will it be for thee. I shall give thee relics, none better under Heaven: some sweat from the brow of Jesu at the time when He was put down and laid in the Sepulchre, and one of the nails thou shalt have from His feet, and the holy crown that God wore on His head; and thou shalt have the chalice that He blessed. The vessel of silver I will give thee gladly: it is set with gold and precious stones. And thou shalt have the knife that God held at meat; some of the beard of St. Peter besides, and some of the hairs of his head." Charles hath rendered him salutation

and friendship for this; his whole heart quaked with pity and joy.

XI. Quoth the Patriarch: "Ye are welcome. By my faith, God hath been your guide! I will give thee relics of great virtue: milk of the holy Virgin, with which she suckled Jesus when He was come down to earth in our midst; and some of the holy shift wherewith she was clothed."—For these things Charles hath rendered him salutation and friendship. And the Patriarch caused them to be brought; the King received them. Mighty are the relics, for God hath put great virtue in them. A cripple was lying hard by: for six years he had not moved; his bones were cracked, his sinews taut,—but now he leaps to his feet, and never before had he been as whole as now. Thus the Patriarch perceiveth that God hath put great virtue therein, and quickly he causeth the bells to be sounded and re-sounded throughout the city. The King caused a reliquary to be made, better than any other: a thousand marks of finest gold of Araby were melted for the making of it. He had it tight sealed and closed it with bands of silver. Archbishop Turpin was entrusted with the keeping of it. Well-pleased was Charlemagne, and all those who were with him.

XII. Four months the King tarried in the city of Jerusalem, together with his twelve peers, his dear fellows. He held great court, for he was very rich; and he began the making of a minster dedicated to Sainte Marie, which the folk of that country called *la Latine:* for men of all tongues came to that town, to sell their silken stuffs, their linens and their Syrian cloth; herbs, cinnamon, pepper, and spices, and many a good wort I cannot further name. God abideth in Heaven still, and He will have justice of them.

XIII. Long did the Emperor of France tarry, until at length he addressed the Patriarch and said: "Fair Sir, I crave permission, if it please thee, to depart; I must return to my realm of France. A goodly time it is since I have

been there: I have remained long away, and my barons know not into what parts I have gone. Cause now a hundred mules to be charged with my burden of gold and silver." The Patriarch replied:

"Knowest thou what I would fain ask of thee? Destroy the Saracens, who hold us in despite."

"Gladly," said Charles, and pledged his faith on it. "I shall command my men, as many as I may gather, and I shall go into Spain, without delay." And so he did, later; he kept his faith well, what time Roland met his death, and the twelve peers with him.

Now the Emperor has tarried long, and he calls to mind his wife and what he heard tell from her. The King goeth now to seek him she had so praised, nor will he cease until he has found him. That night he caused it to be announced to the Franks in their hostels, and glad of heart were they when they heard it. Next morning at dawn, when the day first appeared, the mules and sumpter beasts were laden and prepared; the barons mounted and took to the road. They came to Jericho, and there they took great store of palms and cried out: "Onward, by God's aid!" loud and clear. The Patriarch also mounted on a strong mule, and for the space of that day he gave them company and guidance. That night the barons were together in their hostels: they lacked for no thing they desired. Next morning, at dawn, when the day first appeared, they mounted again, and took to the road. The Patriarch addressed Charlemagne:

"Fair Sir, if it please thee, give me leave to depart." And the Emperor replied,

"By God's will be it." Thus they exchanged kisses and so parted. The Emperor rode on with his bold fellowship. Strong were their relics with the virtue God gave them, so that they did not come to any water, but its fords were divided for them; they encountered no blind man, but he was given his sight; they straightened the crippled and gave speech to the mute.

XVI. The Emperor journeyed on with his great company and they passed over the mountains and hills of Abilant the rock also of Guitume and the plains lying before it. Then they beheld Constantinople, a mighty city, with its belfries and its eagles and its gleaming bridges. On the right hand of the city for a league's distance they saw orchards planted with pines and white laurels: there flourished the rose, the elder, and the wild-briar. Twenty thousand knights they found seated within, clad in silk and white ermine, and great martin-furs falling down to their very feet. They took their pleasure at table and at chess, and some of them bore their falcons and hawks; and there were present three thousand maidens in gleaming gold embroideries. These were clad in silk: right fair were their bodies; they had their lovers by them, and disported themselves with them. But now behold Charlemagne, who cometh upon a swift and mighty mule! He turns and speaks to Roland:

"I know not where the King may be, but here is a great baronage." He called a knight to him and said, "Friend, where is the King? I have gone far to seek him." And he said to him,

"Ride further on: where the silken cloth is out-stretched ye will find the King seated."

The Emperor rode on without delay. He found King Hugon plowing with a rich plow: the yokes were of fine gleaming gold, and the axles and wheels and plowshares were of bronze. He followed not on foot, goad in hand, but he had two mules, one on either hand, bearing a seat of gold slung between them. There sat the Emperor on a fine cushion made of oriole's feathers in a scarlet covering; at his feet was a trimmed foot-stool of white silver, and on his head a cap. Very fair were his gloves. Four pillars of pure gold stood about him, and he had fine cloth of light gray silk thrown beneath it. The King held a prong of gold in his hand, and thus he did his plowing so featly that he made his furrow straight as a line. But now

behold Charlemagne, who cometh up on a swift and mighty mule!

XVII. The King held his plow for to do his day's labor, and Charlemagne came to him on an ancient path. He saw the out-stretched silk and the glitter of gold. He saluted King Hugon the Strong right willingly. The King looked on Charles and saw his proud bearing, his great and mighty arms, his slender, graceful body.

"Sire, may God preserve thee! By what sign do ye know me?" The Emperor replied,

"Chieftain of France am I; my name is Charlemagne, and my nephew is Roland. I come from Jerusalem and would fain return home; I would gladly see thee and thy baronage." And Hugon the Strong made reply:

"It is seven years and more since I have heard the speech of strange warriors: so great a baronage hath no king under Heaven. I shall keep you by me for a year, if ye wish to remain; I shall give you much goods, gold, silver, and coin: the Franks may take as much of it as they wish to lade and carry. Now by your leave I shall uncouple my oxen."

XVIII. The King uncoupled his oxen and left behind him his plow. They passed through a hundred fields, upward through cultivated lands. The King hath mounted on his mule and rideth with all speed.

"Sire," said King Charles, "that plow of thine, adorned with finest gold without measure, remains behind unguarded. I fear that it may be stolen." And King Hugon said:

"Fear not for that: there has never been a thief here, long as my realm hath endured. Seven years it might remain there, and never would it be taken thence." Said William of Orange,

"Help, St. Peter, help! Truly, if that thing were in France, and if Bertrand were there, it would soon be destroyed by picks and hammers!"

The King pricks his mule and goes on with all speed until he reaches the palace, where he hath seen his wife. He hath caused her to be adorned, and she is dressed out, and the hall and palace are hung with silken draperies. And now behold Charlemagne arrived with his great following!

XIX. The Emperor dismounted before the white marble steps and ascended them to the palace hall. There within they found six thousand knights seated, adorned with ermine fur and scarlet robes. They were taking their pleasure at chess and the table. They ran out, all and some, and received the sumpter beasts and the strong swift mules, and led them gently to their quarters. Charles beholdeth the palace and the great wealth therein: the tables are of fine gold, and eke the chairs and benches. The palace was veined with azure; very beautiful it was with painted semblances of beasts and serpents, of flying birds and all created things. The palace was vaulted and enclosed above; it was made by compass and featly joined together; the pillars of the center were adorned with silver. A hundred doves there were made of marble, and each was adorned with fine gold; two children's figures were there set up, made of copper and bronze, and each one held in its mouth a horn of white ivory. If a wind came from the sea, from the northwest or west, or any other winds that smote the palace from the west, they caused them to turn about right often like a wagon wheel that turns about upon the earth. The horns sounded and resounded and roared like trumpets or thunder or a great hanging bell. The one of them gazed upon the other smiling in such wise that both of them seemed to live. Charles looks upon the palace and all its wealth, and his own possessions he prizes no more than a glove. He recalls his dame, whom he had so sorely threatened.

XX. "Seignors," said Charlemagne, "this is a very noble palace. Neither Alexander nor Constantine of old had such

a one, nor Crescentius of Rome, who built so honorably." When the Emperor had said these words, he heard a wind coming up from the sea; it came roaring to the palace and smote it, so that it was moved gently; it was turned like a mill-tree. The images sounded their horns and the one smiled over at the other so that it would have seemed to you that both were living; one sounded high, the other clear: lovely it was to hearken to. He who heard it was of the opinion that he was in Paradise, where the angels sing gently and sweetly. The storm was great, with snow and hail and a fierce strong wind that raged and roared. But the windows were wrought of resplendent crystal, cut and joined with diamonds from far beyond the sea: within it was as calm and peaceful as in the summer month of May when the sun shines clear. Fierce was the storm, and violent and strong. Charles saw the palace turn and roar, not knowing what it was,—nor had he learned it from afar. He could not remain upon his feet, and must needs sit down on the marble floor. The Franks were all quite overturned, for they could not hold themselves upright; they covered their heads before and behind, and one of them said to the other: "We are badly caught; the gates are open but we may not issue forth."

XXI. Charles beheld the palace turn about again and again. The Franks covered their heads, for they dared not look on. King Hugon the Strong came towards the Franks and said:

"Be not discomforted!"

"Sire," quoth Charlemagne, "will this never cease?" And Hugon the Strong said,

"Wait but a little time!"

Evening approached and the storm ceased. The Franks leaped to their feet. Supper was all-prest; Charlemagne seated himself together with his bold barons, King Hugon the Strong and his dame beside him, and also his daughter, whose hair was golden, and whose face was fair and bright.

White was her flesh as the summer flower. Oliver gaze long at her, and his love was turned to her. Between hi teeth he spoke, so that no man might hear:

"May it please God, the King of glory, of His hol majesty, that I may hold her for my own in France o in Dun! For of her would I have all my pleasure."

Nothing that they desired was denied to them. The had enow of venison and boar's meat, wild goose and crane and peppered peacocks; wine and mead a-plenty wa brought to them, and jongleurs sang and fiddled and playe on the rote. The Franks took their pleasure in the manne of gentlefolk.

XXII. When they had dined within the royal palace, an the chief seneschals had removed the cloths from the table the squires sprang up in ranks on all sides and went to th hostels to attend to the horses. King Hugon the Strong addressed Charlemagne; he led him aside, together with the twelve peers; holding the King by the hand, he conducted them into a vaulted chamber which was painted with flowers, with stones of crystal. A carbuncle shone there, bright and glittering, set in a pillar in the time of King Goliath. Here were twelve soft beds of copper and bronze, with pillows of samite and coverings of cendal: the smallest was of weight enough for the pulling of twenty oxen and four waggons. The thirteenth is set up in the circle's center: the feet of it are of silver and the body of enamel. Fair was the covering, that the gentle fay Masele had made and given to the King. The trappings had greater worth than the treasure of the Admiral. Rightly did the King owe love to the giver, and well did he keep and preserve it.

XXIII. The Franks are within the chamber and have beheld these beds; each one of the peers hath taken his own. King Hugon the Strong commands that wine be brought to them: he was prudent and wary, and eke filled with knavish devices. Therefore he took a man and hid him in the

vaulted chamber, within a marble stair that was hollowed out inside. All the night he spied on them through a little hole; so brightly glowed the carbuncle that a man might see as though it were May-time in the summer when the sun shines clear. King Hugon the Strong hath departed to his dame, and Charles and the Franks couch themselves at their leisure. Anon the counts and marquises will take to jesting and boasting among themselves.

XXIV. The Franks are in the chamber, and they have drunk well of the wine. The one of them said to the other, "Gaze well upon this splendor! Behold how fine is this palace, and how great is the wealth in it! If it pleased the King of glory and holy majesty, my Lord Charlemagne had now bought it, or had conquered it by his arms in fair combat." . . .

Charlemagne said to them: "It befits me to boast first. Let King Hugon the Strong take any knight of his meiny, bold and mighty though he be,—let him be armed in two hauberks and two closed helms, and seated on a strong swift courser; and, if the King will lend me his sword with its gold-adorned hilt, I will smite on those helmets where they glitter most bright; I will cut through the hauberks and jeweled helmets, and through the trappings and saddle of the mighty steed. I will strike the sword in the earth and let it go its way: it shall be recovered by no mortal man till it be dug up from a lance's measure deep in the earth."

"By the Lord," quoth the listener, "ye are bold and strong! How foolish was King Hugon to offer you harborage! If I hear you speak foolhardily, I shall have you dispatched at dawn of day."

XXV. Quoth the Emperor, "Boast thou, nephew Roland!"

"Gladly, my Lord," said he, "whatever thou command me.—Let but King Hugon lend me his ivory horn, and I shall go out in the midst of this plain: my breath will come out so strong, and the wind will blow so loudly, that in all

the great city no door nor out-door will remain standing, though they be heavy and made strongly of bronze or steel, but one shall strike over the other by reason of the roaring wind. Very mighty will King Huron have to be if he puts himself forward, nor loses the hair of his beard by burning, together with the great martin skins about his neck, and the ermine-lined surcoat upon his back."

"By the Lord," quoth the listener, "here is an evil boasting! How mad was King Hugon to give harborage to such folk!"

XXVI. "Boast thou, Sir Oliver," said Roland the Courteous.

"Gladly," spoke the Count, "if Charles permit it.—If the King were to take his bright-haired daughter and put us to rest together in a room upon one bed, I would have evidence of her an hundred times during that night, else may I lose my head by mine own will on the morrow."

"By the Lord," quoth the listener, "thou wilt yield thee worsted before that! Great shame hast thou said; if the King knew of it, he would have no more love for thee all his life long!"

XXVII. "And thou, Sir Archbishop, wilt thou companion us in boasting?"

"Yea," said Turpin, "by commandment of Charles I will. Let the King take three of the best steeds that are in the town and lead them out on the plain. When the best of them are galloping I shall charge thither on my horse with so great speed that I shall seat me on the third, but let go by two; and I shall hold four apples in my hands, the which I shall be throwing and casting up on high, the while I let the steeds course as they will; if any apple escapes me or falls down from my hand, let Charlemagne my lord thrust out the eyes from my head."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this guest is fine and noble: he hath no shame before the King, my master."

XXVIII. Quoth William of Orange: "Seigneurs, now I shall boast. See ye this globe? Never did I see a better; behold how much there is in it of fine gold and silver! Many a time have thirty men made essay thereof, but they might not move it, so heavy was the burden. With a single hand I shall take it to-morrow, and cause it to move through the midst of this palace, and forty spans of the wall I shall throw down with it."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "never will I believe it! A felon is the King if he let thee not try it! When ye are driven forth in the morning I shall tell him."

XXIX. Then said the Emperor: "Now let Ogier boast, the Duke of Denmark, who can do such great things!"

"Gladly," quoth the baron, "by thy good leave.—See ye this pilaster that holds up the palace, which ye saw turning about so often this morning? To-morrow ye shall behold me embrace it with all my strength; and how strong soever it be, it must needs be broken to bits, and the palace will be overturned and shattered on the earth: he who is on the spot shall not be saved. Very foolhardy will King Hugon be if he does not hide himself away."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this man is surely mad. God grant that this boast be never carried out! How foolhardy was the King to harbor you!"

XXX. Then said the Emperor, "Boast thou, Duke Naymes!"

"Gladly," quoth the white-haired peer.—"Tell King Hugon to lend me his brown hauberk, and to-morrow, when I put it on me, I shall leap up four fathoms higher than the castle wall, and how strong soever be that bryny of white or brown steel, the scales of it shall fall from it like straw."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "thou art old and white-haired; but though thou be hoary, thy sinews are yet right tough!"

XXXI. Then said the Emperor: "Boast thou, Sir Berenger!"

"Gladly," quoth the Count, "if thou permit. Let the King take the swords of all his knights and have them buried up to the golden hilts, with the points turned up to the heavens; I shall mount by foot to the top of the highest tower and thereafter cast myself down upon the swords: then ye shall see those blades all to-broken and splintered and cracked to bits one upon the other. Ye shall find none that will have touched my flesh, nor cut the skin nor wounded me deep."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this man is in a frenzy! If he makes proof of this boast, he is wrought of iron or steel!"

XXXII. Then said the Emperor, "Sir Bernard, boast thou!"

"Gladly," quoth the Count, "if thou command it. See ye the great water that roars by at this ford? To-morrow I shall cause it to issue forth from its channel and flood over the fields, so that ye will clearly see it; all of the cellars of the town it shall fill, and it shall moisten and wet the noble King Hugon: he will go up into the highest tower, nor come down again until I command it."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this man is quite mad! how foolhardy was King Hugon to give you harborage! To-morrow morning ye shall all be dismissed."

XXXIII. Then said Count Bertrand, "Now let my uncle boast."

"Gladly, by my faith," quoth Ernalt of Gironde. "Let King Hugon take four great weights of lead and melt them all together in vats, and then let him have a large deep tun filled therewith to the very brim: I shall seat myself within it until the ninth hour; when the lead is run and the waves are settled, after it is waxed firm, ye will see me shake myself, and the lead will split and break over me: there will not remain the weight of an Ascalonian onion."

"Truly a marvelous boast," quoth the spy. "Never have I heard tell of such tough skin on any man. If he make proof of this boast he is wrought of iron or steel."

XXXIV. Said the Emperor, "Boast thou, Sir Aimer!"

"Gladly," said the Count, "if thou command it. I have a bonnet adorned with a stone of Alemayne in the likeness of a great sea-fish, wrought beyond the sea: to-morrow when I don it and put it on my head, while King Hugon is at dinner I shall eat his fish and drink his mead; and then from behind I shall give him such a blow that I will cause him to incline forwards on the table. Then ye shall see the pulling of beards and the tearing of hair!"

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this man is surely mad. Foolish indeed was King Hugon to harbor you."

XXXV. "Boast thou, Sir Bertrand," said the Emperor.

"Gladly," quoth the Count, "according to thy pleasure. —Borrow me two shields in the morning, strong and firm; thereafter I will go up to the summit of that ancient hill, and there ye shall see me strike them together with such strength, and fly up the mountain, and cry so loud, that for four leagues round in the country no stag nor doe will remain in the woods to flee away; no wild hind nor deer nor fox will tarry there."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this is an ill boast! When the King learns of it, he will be angered and wroth."

XXXVI. "Boast thou, Sir Gerin," said the Emperor Charles.

"Gladly," quoth the Count. "To-morrow, in the sight of all the rest, bring me out a strong, firm spear into the court: let it be great and heavy, and have it put in the charge of a villein. Let the shaft be of the wood of an apple-tree, with an ell's length of iron. Lay me down two pennies on the summit of the tower, upon the marble pillar, so that one of them rests on the other: then I shall pace forth the distance of half a league, and there, if ye take

care to watch, ye shall see me cast the spear to the tower's end and throw down one penny so gently and quietly that the other will not be moved. Thereafter I shall come running so lightly and swiftly by the door of the hall that I shall recover the spear before ever it falls to earth."

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "this boast is worth three of the others; there is no shame in it towards my lord the King."

XXXVII. When the knights had made their boasts they fell asleep. The spy, who had heard everything, issued forth from the chamber and went to the door of the room where lay King Hugon. He found it open, and he approached the bed. The King beheld him, and in haste he said,

"Come, tell me, what doth Charles, the bold of countenance, and his Franks? Didst hear them tell if they will remain with me?"

"By the Lord," quoth the spy, "they had no thought of that. This night they have boasted a-plenty at thine expense, and held thee up to mockery." And he tells him all the boastings, as much as he heard of them. When King Hugon heard this he was angered and wroth.

XXXVIII. "By my faith," said the King, "Charles hath done great folly in boasting at my expense, for last evening I harbored them in my chambers of stone. If they do not fulfill their boasts as they spoke them, I shall cut off their heads with my shining sword."

A hundred thousand of his men he summoned before him, and commanded that they put on brynies and capes, and gird on their polished swords. They entered into the palace and seated themselves about him. When mass was said, Charles came forth from the minster, he and the twelve peers together, his bold companions. The Emperor went ahead, for he was mightiest, and he bore in his hand a branch of the olive tree. King Hugon beheld him; from afar he addressed him reproachfully:

"Charles, for what reason didst thou boast at my expense and hold me up to mockery? Last evening I harbored you in my chambers of stone: ye should not therefore think such folly. If ye do not fulfill the boastings as ye spake them, I shall cut off your heads with my shining sword."

When the Emperor hears this he hath great fear of his life. He looks upon the Franks, his bold companions.

"Last evening we were over-drunk with wine and mead: I believe the King had a spy within the chamber."

XXXIX. "Sire," quoth Charlemagne, "last evening thou didst harbor us, and didst give us enow of wine and mead. Now it is the custom in France, from Paris even to Chartres, that when the Franks are gone to bed, they make game and boasts, and speak both wisdom and folly. Let me speak now to my bold barons, and I shall give thee certain answer, on my pledge."

"On my faith," quoth Hugon, "too great is the shame. . . . By my faith and my white beard, when ye depart from me, ye shall do no boasting more!"

XL. Charlemagne turned aside, and the twelve peers with him; they took counsel together beneath a vaulted arch.

"Seignors," said the Emperor, "evil has befallen us. So much did we drink of wine and mead that we said things which should not have been." He caused the relics to be brought before him, and they cast themselves down in prayer: they smote their breasts in penance, and prayed the Lord of Heaven, of his might, to preserve them that day from King Hugon the Strong, who was so wroth against them. And behold, an angel of God appeared before them; he approached Charlemagne and lifted him up:

"Charles, be not dismayed, Jesus commands thee! The boastings thou madest last evening were great folly; Christ bids thee never do the like to any man again. Go and begin them, for not one of them will fail." The Emperor listens, and he is greatly rejoiced.

XLI. Charlemagne of France hath risen to his feet and lifted up his hand to cross his head. He spoke to the Franks:

"Be not dismayed; come before King Hugon in the palace."

XLII. "Sire," quoth Charlemagne, "I may not give this up, nor do I so say. Last evening thou didst harbor us in thy chambers of stone; some of us were over-drunk with thy wine and mead. When thou didst leave us, thou didst a great wrong: thou didst leave behind a spy with us. We wit of a country in which the custom is set down: if thou wert to have done it there, it had been great felony.—We shall fulfill the boastings; it may not be omitted: whoever thou choosest shall begin first." And Hugon the Strong said—he did not mischoose:

"Here standeth Oliver, who spoke such great folly, saying that in one night he would possess my daughter an hundred times. May I be a scoundrel if I do not deliver her over to him: if I fail to do it, I shall have but little esteem for myself. But if he fails a single time by recreancy, I shall cut off his head with my polished sword: he and the twelve peers will be given over to torture." Charlemagne, who hath great trust in God, smiled and spoke to him:

"Thou shalt not without need let them live." All the day long they disport themselves, take their pleasure, and play games; nothing that they desire is wanting, until the quiet night is come. The King causes his daughter to be conducted to her chamber, which is hung with silken curtains: she herself hath flesh as white as the flower of the thorn. Oliver enters in, and he begins to smile. When the maiden beheld him, she was greatly afeared; but being courteous, she spoke a seemly word:

"Sir, have ye left France to slay us women?" And Oliver replied:

"Fear not, fair friend: if thou wilt believe me, thou shalt be saved therefrom."

XLIII. Oliver lay in the bed beside the King's daughter: he turned her to him and kissed her thrice. She was well-instructed and prudent; and he spoke to her courteously, saying:

"Lady, thou art very fair, and the daughter of a King: therefore, though I have spoken my boast, have thou no fear: I will not that it be fulfilled against thy desire."

"Sir," quoth the maiden, "have pity of me: I shall never be joyous again if thou put me to shame."

"Fair damsel," quoth Oliver, "let it be as thou commandest; but I must needs be quit of my boast before the King. I shall make thee my true-love, nor ever seek other." She was a truly courteous dame, and therewith she pledged her faith upon it.

That night the Count had to do with her no more than thirty times. In the early morning the King hath come to his daughter and addressed her; he spoke and asked,

"Tell me, daughter; hath he done it an hundred times?" And she replied,

"Yea, my lord the King." No need to ask if the King was wroth. He went into the palace where Charles was seated:

"The first one is saved: he must be a magician, by my faith! Now I would know if it be truth or falsehood about the others."

XLIV. Right sad was King Hugon for the boast that was fulfilled, and he said to Charlemagne:

"The first one is saved, and I would know if the others will do likewise."

"Sire," quoth the Emperor, "it shall be according to thy pleasure. He whom thou choosest shall begin."

"Here stands William son of Count Aimeri: let him take the globe lying within the chamber, and if he cannot cast it as he said last evening, I shall cut off his head with my steel sword: he and the twelve peers are come to their end."

XLV. Now Count William sees that the jest is upon him: he disrobes him of his brown beaver fur and casts it down by the cords of silk. He went speedily into the chamber where was the great ball; he lifted it up with one hand, and moved it by his great strength; he let it go so that all folk saw him. Forty spans did it break down from the wall: that was not by his might, but by God's virtue for love of Charlemagne, who had brought them thither.

XLVI. Right sad was King Hugon for his palace, which was thus broken. He said to his men,

"This is an evil boasting. By the faith I owe you, this folk is not comely! They are magicians who have entered in here, and they wish to keep my country and all my fiefs. Now I would know if the others will do likewise. But if a single one of them fails, by the Omnipotent, I shall have them hanged up before the wind at the summit of this hill, on a strong pillar: there shall be no help for them."

XLVII. "Sire," quoth Charlemagne, "would ye have more of these boasts? He whom thou choosest shall begin." And Hugon the Strong said,

"Here stands Bernard, son of Count Aimeri, who boasted that he would cause this great water, that rushes by in the valley, to issue forth from its channel and enter into the city; to spread about on all sides and cause me to mount high up into my palace, whence I might not descend before he commanded it."

XLVIII. Now Count Bernard knoweth that he must needs begin, and he said to Charlemagne,

"Pray the Lord therefor." He went with all speed to the water and made the sign of the cross over the fords: God, the glorious King of Heaven, worked so great a miracle there that He caused all the great water to issue forth from its channel and spread over the fields so that all folk saw it plainly: it entered into the city and filled the cellars and moistened and made wet King Hugon's people. The King

fled up into his highest tower a-foot. Charles of the bold countenance standeth on an ancient hill, he and the twelve peers, his knightly barons: they pray God to have pity on them.

XLIX. King Charlemagne is upon an ancient hill, he and the twelve peers, his noble companions; he heareth King Hugon make lament in the tower, and promise all his treasure to him if he will betake him into France: he will become his man and hold his realm of him. When the Emperor hears this he hath great pity, for a man should be inclined to humbleness, and he prayeth Jesu that the waters be arrested. God showeth great virtue for the love of Charlemagne: the water departs from the city and by way of the plains it returns into its channel, so that the banks are full. Then might the King come down from his tower, and he approaches Charlemagne beneath the shadow of a fruit-tree:

"By my faith, just Emperor, I know now that God loves thee. I would become thy man, and hold my realm of thee: I will give thee treasures and conduct into France."

"Wouldst thou have more boasts, Sire?" quoth Charlemagne. And Hugon the Strong said,

"Nay, not this week. If all of them are fulfilled, I must make lament every day."

L. "Sire," quoth Charlemagne to Hugon the Strong, "thou art now my man before all. This day we must feast and make great disport and wear our golden crowns together. For thy friendship I am ready with mine."

"And I, Sire, with mine," quoth Hugon; "let all be to thy honor. Let us make a procession within this closed place."

Charlemagne wears his great crown of gold, and Hugon his, a little lower: Charlemagne was the taller by a full foot and three inches. The Franks gaze on them, and there is not one who does not say,

"Our lady the Queen spoke wrong and foolishly. Charles

is a very mighty leader of armies: we shall enter no land that it be not to our glory."

LI. Charles weareth his crown in Constantinople; Hugon wears his lower down. The Franks gaze on them, and many of them say,

"Our lady the Queen spoke folly when she praised other prowess as high as ours." Thus they formed a procession within that enclosed place. The dame of Hugon, wearing her crown also, held her fair-haired daughter by the hand. When Oliver looked upon her he was glad to speak with her: he bore him gently towards her and cherished love for her. Gladly would he have kissed her, but for her father's sake he dared not. They entered into the minster, when they left the enclosure, and Archbishop Turpin, master of orders, sang mass for them, and the knights made offering. Then they went into the palace, and they had great delight together.

LII. The Franks are within the palace and they have gone to dinner. Nothing they wish for is denied them. They have enow of venison and cranes and geese and peppered pheasants; they receive an abundance of wine and mead. The jongleurs sing and play upon the rote and fiddle. King Hugon the Strong addresseth Charlemagne:

"All of my great treasure shall be given over to thee: let the Franks take thereof as much as they desire to bear away." And the Emperor replied:

"Let be all that: they shall not take a penny's fee of thy goods. Already they have so much of mine that they can not carry it. Grant us leave now to depart, for we must go." And Hugon the Strong said,

"I dare not deny you." The mules and sumpter beasts were held ready by the stairs. . . . And the Emperor said,

"Let it be as thou commandest." So they kissed each other, and commended themselves to God.

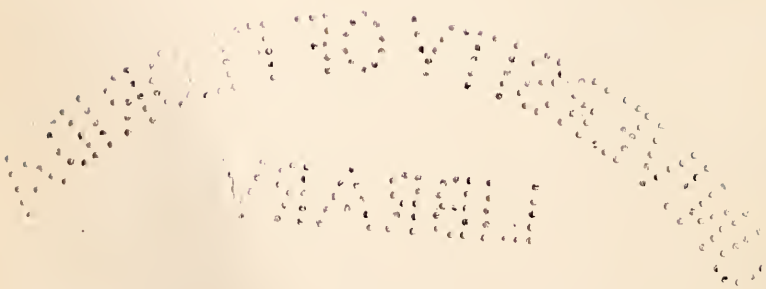
LIII. When the Franks had eaten they took their departure. The mules and sumpter beasts were held ready by

the stone stairs; the Franks mounted upon them and departed joyously. Now the daughter of King Hugon comes running to Oliver with all speed, and she lays hold of him by the hem of his robe:

"To thee I have given all my friendship and love; take me with thee to France: I shall go hence with thee."

"Fair one," quoth Oliver, "my love must leave thee behind. I go hence to France with my lord Charles."

LIV. Right joyous and glad was Charles, doughty knight, who had conquered so great a King without combat. What need is there for me to make long my tale? They pass over strange realms and countries until they come to Paris, the fair city. . . . They enter into St. Denis's minster, and Charlemagne casts himself down in prayer. After he hath made orison to God he rises up, lays the nail and crown upon the altar, and divides the other relics throughout his realm. There present was the Queen, and she cast herself down at his feet. The King hath pardoned her all ill-will for the love of the Sepulchre unto which he hath prayed.



CHARLES AND ELEGAST

Give ear to me, and I will tell you a fair tale and true. It came to pass one evening that Charlemagne did sleep at Ingelheim on the Rhine: all the land was his, for he was Emperor, and therewith King. Hearken to the true marvel that befell the King, as is still couth to many folk; it chanced while he lay at Ingelheim, weening to wear his crown and hold court next day for the increase of his glory. As he slept there, an angel called to him so that the King awoke at the sound of the words he heard. He said to him:

"Arise, thou noble man, and don on thy clothes with all speed; arm thyself and go forth to steal, else thou wilt lose life and honor together: so God, the Lord of Heaven, bade me command thee. If thou dost not steal this night, then evil will befall thee, for thou shalt die and forego thy life, ere ever this court be sundered. Beware, therefore, and go out as robber if thou wilt. Take up shield and spear; arm thyself and mount thy steed, sparing no haste." The King heard and he marveled—for he saw no one—what that strange summons might mean. He pondered deeply, wondering who brought that message. He thought he heard him in his sleep; he gave little heed, and thought of other things. The angel who came from God spoke to him as if in anger:

"Arise, Charles, and go forth to steal! God bade me command thee, and He lays this upon thee, else thou shalt lose thy life." With this word he was silent, and the King cried out, "Alas!" as one who was greatly afeared: "What doth this marvel mean? Is it some hobgoblin or some sprite that torments me and tells me this wondrous thing? Ah Lord of Heaven, what need have I to steal? I am so

rich that there is no man on earth, either king or count, how rich soever he be in possessions, that he needs not to be subject to me and stand at my service. My own land is so great that its like can nowhere be found. From Cologne on the Rhine to Rome the land is mine; I am Lord and my wife is Lady east to the Donau and west to the wild sea. Moreover I have Galicia and Spain, that I won with my hand when I drove out the heathen. What need have I, then, to steal like a miserable wretch? Wherefore doth God bid me do this? Unwillingly would I break His commandment, did I know that He commanded it. I may not believe that God desireth this sin of me, that I go out and commit theft." As he lay thus weighing it back and forth, hither and yon, he drowsed a little, so that he closed his eyes. Then spake the same angel to him:

"If thou follow not God's commandment, O King, thou art undone; it shall cost thee thy life." Quoth the angel of Paradise, "Do thou, O King, act the wise man's part: go forth this very day and steal as a thief: it is God's will." With these words he departed, and Charles began to cross himself at the marvel he had heard:

"I shall not omit to do God's word and commandment; I shall be a thief, though it be wrong-doing, and I hang for it by the neck. Much liever had it been to me if God had taken all that I hold in fief of Him, land and castles alike (saving only my knightly arms), and that I might have to maintain myself with my shield and spear alone, as one who hath nought, and lives by adventure. That were rather my desire, than to be caught in this net, and have to go forth to steal without delay: to go steal, or to lose God's grace. Then let Him now give me strength! Would that I were out of the hall, without tale and speech, although it cost me seven fine castles of stone upon the Rhine! How may I now speak of dishonor to the knights and noble lords that lie here in the hall? And what shall be my speech now, since I, without support from anyone, must fare by dark night into a land that is strange and

unknown to me?" With these words King Charles went to make him ready and garb himself in his rich clothes, as one who hath resolved to steal. It was his custom to have his weapons by the bed in which he lay; they were the fairest ever seen. And when he was armed he went through the palace. No bolt or door there was that might withstand him: they were undone before him. He might go where he would. No man saw him, for all folk lay fast asleep, as God willed: He did this for the King's faith, and gave him ready help. When he had passed the castle bridge he went secretly to the stall where he knew he might find his steed and harness. Then might there be no longer tarrying: he saddled his noble steed and mounted on it.

When he came to the gate he beheld the watchman and the porter, who wist not that their lord was so near by them with his shield. They were fast asleep, by God's will. The King dismounted and did open the gate that stood barred; he led out his horse without sound or rumor. Then mounted King Charles upon his saddle and said:

"Lord God, so truly as thou didst come to earth, and wert Father and Son together, to redeem us all, whom Adam had ruined with those who came after him (Thou didst let Thyself be put upon the cross when the Jews had taken thee; they pierced Thee with a spear and smote Thee, taking pleasure therein; and this bitter death, O Lord, Thou didst receive for our need, and thereafter Thou didst harrow Hell): so truly as this is true, and that Thou didst raise up Lazarus from death as he lay in his grave, and eke that Thou didst make bread of stones, and wine of water; even so mayest Thou be my companion in this dark night, and manifest to me Thy strength! Merciful God and Father, I turn me wholly to Thee." He had many thoughts about whither he might best go to begin his stealing. Noble Charles came into a wood not far thence; and as he rode the moon shone very bright, the stars made light in the heavens, and the weather was fair and clear.

Then thought the King, "I have been wont to hate

thieves above all things, whenever I knew of any that craftily robbed and stole folk's goods from them; now should I give praise to those who live by banditry; they are well aware that they risk life and goods if they are caught: then they are hanged, or their heads are cut off, or they die a more shameful death. Great is their fear. Never more will it happen to me in all my life to put any man to death for a small treasure. For a little thing I have driven Elegast out of his land; and he oft-whiles sets his life as pledge for the goods whereby he lives. Much care must he have, methinks. He owns no land nor fief and hath no further recourse than what he gains by stealing: therewith he must support himself. I took from him the land he ruled over, both castles and land; I rue it now, but I did not know it then: for he had in the bands of those who were maintained by him a store of knights and men-at-arms whom I have also disinherited from land and goods. Now they follow him in poverty. I leave none of them in peace; through me their protector hath lost burg and fief that supported them. He hath no refuge now: he must maintain himself in woods and desert places, and go hunting alone for the wherewithal to live by. But yet it is true that he stealeth from no poor man who liveth by his own pain. What pilgrims or chapmen have he lets them brook; but he leaves none else secure. Bishops and canons, deacons and priests,—if he can entrap them on the way, he takes from them mules and steeds, and thrusts them from their horses' trappings so that they fall down upon the heath; and he robs them by force of all that they have brought with them: silver, garments, and vessels. Thus he supports himself. Wherever he knows that there are rich folk he takes their silver and gold from them. Great is his cunning; no man may catch him, though many a one has mightily tried. Now do I wish that in this night I could be his companion: Lord God, help me to meet him!"

Speaking thus the King fared on, and he heard how a knight came near as one who desired to ride unmarked: his

device was black as coal, and swart also were the helm and shield that he bore about his neck. Admirable was his hauberk, and the surcoat above it was black; black also was the steed that he bestrode. He came riding through the wood by a path apart. When the King was near to meeting him he crossed himself in fear, for he thought he was the Devil, since he was so black. He commended himself to almighty God. He thought,

"Whether good or ill befalls me, I shall not flee before this man by night; I shall surmount this adventure, though I know beforehand that it is the Devil, and none other. If he came from God he would not be so black. All that I can see is dusky, both horse and man. Methinks that ill-hap is coming near; I pray God to watch that this wight harm me not." And as he came nearer the Black Man saw the King approach; and he thought,

"This man is lost and hath missed his way: it is clearly to be seen. He shall surrender here all his weapons, that are by seeming the best I have beheld in seven years: they gleam with gold and precious stones like the light of day. Wherefore came he into this wood? No poor man might wear such weapons or bestride a horse of such strength and fair limbs."

When they met they passed by without greeting. One of them gazed close at the other, but nought else did they do. When he who rode the black horse had passed by the King, he stopped still and wondered who the other might be:

"Why doth he thus go by and avoid speech, so that he gave me no greeting at our encounter, nor asked me any question? Methinks he must be going to do some evil deed. If I were sure that he came as spy, to bring me or my people into evil case with the King, whom I do greatly fear, he would not fare on by night without scathe. What need is it that drives him abroad through bush and forests if he is not seeking me? By the Lord Who made me, he shall not escape me this night without test of his strength.

I will speak to him and know him, and no matter who he be, I shall win from him his steed and all he wears, and cause him to return shamefully. A fool was he to come here." Therewith he turned back his steed and followed after the King. When he came up with him he cried aloud,

"Sir Knight, halt! What is it thou ridest after? I desire to know what thou seekest, what thou dost chase after and desire, ere thou ridest hence. Though thou be proud and scarce of thy speech, thou wilt do well to give me these tidings. I would know who thou art, and wither thou goest at this time, and how thy father hight. I shall not release thee from telling." The King replied,

"Thou askest so many things that I will not give thee this knowledge: rather would I fight with thee than tell it by force. My life would have been too long if any man might force from me things I did not wish to tell, unless it were my will. Let good or evil come of it, we shall now cut short and decide this strife between us."

The King's shield was covered over: he did not wish to use it unconcealed for the sake of the device that was on it; he was unwilling to have it known that he was the King.—Therewith they turned about their strong, swift steeds. They were both well armed, with mighty spears. They met in a certain space with such violence that the steeds were bent down perforce upon their legs. Each of them grasped his sword, like men desirous of combat. A long time they fought, sufficient for a man to fare a mile. Swift and strong was the Black Knight, and fell were his attacks, so that the King was afeared, thinking that he was the Devil. He smote the Black One upon the shield that he held before him in manly wise, and it was cloven in two as if it had been a linden leaf. The Black One likewise struck the King. Up and down went the swords, on the helmets and on the mail, so that much of it must needs give way. Neither hauberk was so doughty that the red blood did not flow through the mail from the skin. There was a great sound of blows. The splinters of the shields

flew about; the helmets on their heads were bent in, and they were greatly hurt and cut, so sharp was their blades' edge.

The King thought: "This man is skilled in weapons. I am so sore bestead by him that, if God help me not, I must die of it. If I must here confess my name, I shall ever be ashamed of it: never again shall I win honor." Then he gave so sore a stroke to the Black One who was before him that he had nearly felled him and caused him to tumble from his horse. No peace was there between them: the Black One repaid with such a blow on his helm that it was to-bent, and the sword was sundered in two, so fierce was that stroke. When the Black One saw that his sword was lost to him, he thought:

"Fy on me that ever I was born! Of what avail is it that I live? Never have I had good fortune nor ever shall I have. Wherewith may I make further resistance? My life is not worth two pears to me, for my hands are empty now."

Shameful it seemed to the King to strike him who stood weaponless on the field before him, with his sword riven in two and lying on the field. He thought,

"That is no vengeance if one would hurt or kill him who cannot make defense." So they stopped fighting in the wood. Much did either think, wondering who the other might be.

"By the Lord Who made me," quoth King Charles, "if thou tellest me not that which I ask thee, thou hast lived thy life to the end: what is thy name and who art thou? Let us end this strife. If I may depart honorably I shall let thee ride hence when I know thy name." The Black One said,

"I am agreed, if thou wilt tell me wherefore thou comest here by night, and whose evil fortune thou seekest." Then said Charles, the noble man,

"Speak thou first, and I shall tell thee what I seek and pursue here. I dare not ride by day: it is not without

cause that thou seest me here thus armed. I shall tell thee how it hath chanced when thou hast named thy name, be sure of it." Anon that knight answered:

"My lord, I am called Elegast. Evil hap hath been mine: by mischance I lost land and goods that once were mine, as many a man does. If I should tell thee how this thing befell, the tale would seem to thee over-long before I made an end: so ill is my fortune." When the King heard this he was as rejoiced as if all the goods that sail upon the Rhine were his. He said:

"Sir Knight, thou hast told me thy name: if it please thee, tell me now whereon thou livest. By all that God holds dear, and foremost by Himself, thou shalt know no wrath of mine; and so much will I tell thee, if thou askest, without combat or evil mood; if thou dost this for me thou mayest be certain of it."

"Lord," answered Elegast, "I will not hide it. What I live upon I must steal. Fy on me that ever I was born! Since I have lost that by which I lived, and King Charles drove me from my land (I needs must tell thee, shame though it be), I have maintained myself in woods and desert places. That whereby twelve folk live must be yielded by rich folks; but how much soever it be, I steal from no poor man that liveth by his own pain. What pilgrims and chapmen have I let them brook; but I leave none else secure. Bishops and canons, abbots and monks, deacons and priests, wherever I may entrap them, I craftily take their goods from them. There is no strong-box, how fast soever it be, that I will not bring into my hands and my fellows', if I know that there is wealth in it. What more should I say? My cunning is manifold. My fellows abide now in the wood, and I rode out upon adventure; and surely I have found one now, for I have lost my sword: no goods would I prefer to take if I might have it whole again. I have had my share of blows, more than ever I won of any man in one day. Now tell me, Sir Knight, what is thy name? And this foe of thine: is he so mighty that thou

must needs ride by night? Might I not vanquish those that hate thee? Thou art right doughty with thy weapons." The King thought:

"God hath heard my prayer; now let Him give me further counsel. Here is the man I desired above all others to accompany this night, and God hath brought him aptly to me. Now must I lie, by very need.—By the Lord that hath made me," said the King, "in me shalt thou find steady fellowship, firm peace and friendship. I shall tell thee what is my wont: of what avail to conceal aught from a friend? I have stolen so much goods, that if I were caught with the half of it I might not be let go free for my weight in red gold. But need forced me thereto: need breaks down all opposition."

"Tell me, Sir Knight, who thou art."

"I shall tell it thee if it please thee. I am called Adelbrecht, and it is my wont to steal unrightfully in churches and in cloisters and in God's houses. I steal all sorts of things, and I let none go unharmed, neither rich nor poor: I hearken not to their lamentation. I spare no man if I may win of him; rather do I take of his goods than give him aught of mine! Thus I have maintained myself. I have laid plans for a treasure that I know of. It would be ready to my hand before morning if I could find a fellow: as much as I might desire and my horse might carry. This treasure was ill-won; God would not take it ill of us if we might have a part of it. The riches are in a castle that I know well. Though we had five hundred pounds of it, that would not harm the owner to the value of two pears: and it was, moreover, ill gained. Tell me, Elegast, what is thy pleasure: shall we use our prowess for this end and be fellows together for the night? Whatever we may gain before day comes, I shall divide and thou shalt choose: let him who plays false lose his wit." Elegast said to him:

"Where lies this treasure? Tell me, my dear friend: in what place is it? It may be where I shall wish to go

with thee, but I would know it before I follow thee one foot." Then spake Charles, the noble knight:

"I shall give thee tidings of it. Little would it hurt or harm the King though we should lade our horses with the treasure that lieth there, so great it is." When the King said that he would thus steal from himself, Elegast did not hold silence. He spoke and said:

"God forbid! No man living might persuade me to harm the King. Though he, by ill advice, hath taken my land from me and driven me into exile, yet I shall be his friend so far as it lies in my power. I shall do him no wrong by night, for he is my rightful lord. If I did him aught but honor, I must shame me before God; it were hard to urge me thereto." When he heard this he was blithe of heart to know that Elegast wished him well and held him dear. He thought,

"If I may return with honor unscathed, I shall give him so much wealth that he can live honorably, without stealing and robbing: I promise it." After this thought he asked Elegast if he would lead him elsewhere, where both of them might gain booty together by night. Thereto he would gladly give his strength and skill, if he would let him go with him. Elegast said:

"Yea, gladly; but I know not if thou sayest it in jest. We may steal without sin from Eggerick of Eggermond, who hath wedded the King's sister. It is a shame that he is living: he hath betrayed many a man and brought him to great scathe: even from his lord and king he would take life and honor, if he had his will: so much I know well. Yet he holdeth of the King many a fair possession; many a fief and castle. Though he had no refuge left, it would harm him little that we take from his goods. Thither let us go, if it be thy will." The King remained silent, and he thought that according as it was so shaped, it were well to steal there: even though his sister caught him, she would hardly have him hanged. Therewith they agreed between them to go forth and steal Eggerick's great

treasure. The King betrayed himself not. Upon their horses they rode apace over a field where they found a plow standing. Elegast rode on by the way he had chosen, but the King dismounted and took the plowshare that he found on the plow. He thought to himself,

"This is good for the task: he who would go digging in burgs must provide himself with what he needs." Then he mounted straightway and spurred after Elegast, who was some space ahead.

Hearken, and ye shall hear wonders! When they were come before that stronghold, which was the fairest and best that stood upon the Rhine, Elegast said,

"Here, Adelbrecht, would I be. What were best done? I would work according to thy counsel, for I were loath to have ill befall thee, so that men might say: it chanced through this man." The King answered,

"I never came within that hall nor in the castle, that I know of. It were ill-advised for me to go in now: let it all rest with thee." Elegast said,

"That pleases me well. I shall soon wit if thou art a skilled thief. Let us go make a hole in the wall in good time, that we may creep through it." This they agreed to do: they bound their horses speedily, and went to the wall without a sound. Elegast fetched out an iron stave to pick the wall with. Then the King brought forth the plowshare. Elegast stood there and laughed, and asked him where he had it made.

"If I could find the master's house I'd have such another made for me; none of its like have I seen used for such a task, to break through a wall." The King said,

"That may be. Three days ago as I was faring by the Rhine upon my quest, I had need to leave my pick behind: it fell from me upon the road as I was being chased, and for the peril I dared not turn back. Thus I was without my pick, and I took this by moonlight when I found it by a plough." Elegast said,

"It is good enough, if we may get inside with it. Here-

after thou shalt have another made." So they left speaking and made the hole. More fitted was the work to Elegast than it was fitted to the King: though he was strong and great he might not do such work. When they had broken a hole through the wall and they were about to go through, Elegast said,

"Thou shalt receive out here what I bring to thee." He would not permit the King to enter within, so greatly he feared misfortune for him. He thought he was no cunning thief, and yet he would share good and ill with him, and his whole gain. The King remained without, and he went in. Great was the skill of Elegast, that he made proof of many a time; it was neither measured nor small. He took an herb out of a vessel and put it in his mouth: he who had it could understand the crowing of cocks and the baying of dogs. Then he understood the speech of a hound and a cock who were saying in their tongue that the King was standing outside the court. Quoth Elegast,

"What is this? Is the King without? Methinks that danger approaches me: I am betrayed, it seems, or else a sprite deludes me and leads me astray." He went out where he had left the King when he had departed from him, and he told him what he had heard, unless his fancy deluded him, of the cock and the hound who gave judgment in their tongue that the King was there, though they knew not how near. Then said Charles, the noble knight,

"Who hath told thee this? What would the King do here? Wilt thou believe a rooster, or what a dog barks? Then is thy faith not firm."

"Hear then thyself," said Elegast; and he thrust an herb into the mouth of the King as he stood before him, and he said: "Now thou shalt understand it even as I did." Again the cock crowed and said, even as he had before, that the King was there. Elegast said, "Hearken, comrade, to what the cock crows. May I be hanged by the neck if the King be not hard by." Then quoth King Charles,

"Fy, comrade, art thou thus afeared? I thought thou hadst been bolder. Do as thou must, no matter how it fares, even though we are both taken." Elegast said,

"I shall do it.—Alack, what would he gain thereby? Though it chance that men wish to seize us, I shall escape better than thou." He asked to have his herb again; the King sought back and forth, up and down within his mouth, but he lost it at the moment, and he could not find it again. He said:

"What hath befallen me? Methinks that I have lost my herb, which I had erewhile fast-locked between my teeth. By my faith, that would irk me sore!" Then Elegast laughed and said,

"If thou stealest in very truth, how comes it that thou art not taken whenever thou goest a-stealing? It is great wonder thou art living still, and wert not long since dead. Comrade," said he openly, "I stole that herb from thee: thou knowest not a hair of stealing." Thought the King, "Thou sayest truly."

Therewith they left off speaking. He commended him to God to protect him. In part he was uneasy; yet he knew the craft wherewith he caused all the folk of the hall to fall asleep together, and he unlocked all that had been locked with keys, large or small. He went where the treasure lay, ere any wight heard or saw, and he fetched forth as much as seemed good to him. Then Charles wished to ride away; but Elegast bade him tarry: he was about to seek a saddle that was in the chamber where Eggerick and his wife lay; it was the fairest saddle ever seen. No man living might tell the splendor of that saddle; greatly also was the bow to be praised. Thereon hung an hundred bells of red gold that jingled as Eggerick rode.

"Comrade, thou wilt do well to tarry. I shall steal his saddle from him, though I hang for it." Little did this please the King: rather had he done without the vantage of the saddle and the booty, than that Elegast went in once more. When Elegast came to the saddle I have told

you of, and weened to carry it thence, the bells hanging on it gave out so great a sound that Eggerick sprang out of sleep therewith and said,

"Who is at my saddle?" He would have drawn forth his sword had not his wife hindered, for she crossed him and asked him what it was that he was chasing after, or whether sprites were deluding him. She took both sword and scabbard and said,

"No one can have come in. It is some other thing that ails thee." She exhorted and adjured him to tell her the thoughts wherewith he might not sleep for three nights (that she had well marked), nor eat for three days. Thus she questioned him. Many are the arts of women, whether they be young or old: so long she worked upon him that he began to tell her: he had sworn the King's death, and those who were chosen to do it were to come anon. He named them by name, and told who they were who desired the King's harm.

All of this heard Elegast, and he kept it secure in his heart. He thought he would reveal that crime and false murder. When the dame heard these words she answered and said,

"Rather would I that thou wert hanged than I should suffer the King to lose his life thus unprotected." Thereupon Eggerick smote the dame on nose and mouth so that the blood broke forth from them straightway. She raised herself up and leaned her face over the bed's edge. Elegast was ware of this, and he crept up softly; he caught the lady's blood in his right gauntlet, for he wished the King to see it from one who would show it to him, and guard himself from this danger. Then Elegast spoke a prayer wherewith he caused Eggerick to fall asleep, and the dame also; with faith he said his word, so that they slumbered fast. Then Elegast stole from him his saddle and his sword that he held full dear, and he went his ways out of the court to his horse where the King was, who was disquieted for the sake of the goods he was bringing: longer

he would not have remained if he had done his will, so sorely was he afeared. He asked him where he had delayed. Elegast said,

"I could not help it. By all that God hath given life to, if my heart breaks not now with the rue in it, it will never break with bitter teen or pain, of that I am assured, so great is the anger in it now. Comrade," quoth he, "this is the saddle whereof I spoke this day: hold it thou and I shall go back and smite off the head of Eggerick or kill him with a knife as he lieth by his dame. Not for all the gold in the world would I leave it undone. I shall return anon." Then the King exhorted him to tell wherefore he was so dis-eased:

"Art thou not whole, and hast thou not a thousand pounds, and eke the saddle for which thou didst go?"

"Alas, it is another matter," said he, "that hurts my heart and consumes my thought: I have lost my lord. Erewhile I had the chance before me to come again to my goods and to conquer my poverty, and I had good hopes: now I am without them, for my lord will die early in the morrow, and I can tell thee how: Eggerick hath sworn his death." Then Charles was well aware that God commanded him to steal in order to shield him from death. Humbly he gave thanks for it to God, the Lord of Heaven. The King gave answer,

"How dost thou think to escape? If thou shouldst stab him with a knife as he lieth by his dame, the court would be aroused, and if thou hadst not good luck, thou wilt soon have paid for it and ended thy life. Wilt thou cast thyself into that peril? If the King dies, then he is dead; what speech would there be of it? Thou wouldst recover from the rue of it." This he said with cunning, for he wished to test Elegast. Besides, he wished to depart thence; he was not glad to be so long let. Elegast gave answer readily:

"By all that God hath given life to, if thou wert not my comrade, it would not remain unavenged this night that thou hast spoken ill of King Charles, my Lord, who is

worthy of all honor. By the Lord that made me, I sha follow my plan and wreak my anger on those that hav sworn the King's death ere I depart from this burg, let i go well or let it go ill." The King thought,

"This man is my friend, though I have ill deserved i of him. I shall make it good if I may live; he shall over win his misfortune. Comrade, I can better tell thee how t bring Eggerick of Eggermond into a net. In the hour o morning ride thou to the King, where thou mayest fin him, and reveal and tell to him the crime and murder When he hears thy word thou shalt thereby make amends and thy reward will not be small: thou shalt ride by his side always, without any man's envy, as if thou wert his brother all the time God spares thee." Elegast said,

"Whatsoever befalls me, I go not before the King: he is angry at me because I formerly took so great a portion of his treasure that two horses scarce sufficed to carry it. I go not where he may see me, by day or night. That were bootless pain."

"Shall I tell thee what to do?" spoke Charles, the noble man. "Ride into the wood where thou didst leave thy followers; I tell thee further that thou shalt take with thee our booty until tomorrow morn, when we may lightly share it. I shall be messenger to the King in this matter: if he were struck dead it were great sorrow to me."

With these words they parted. Elegast went to his men in the wood where he had left them; and noble Charles went to his castle at Ingelheim. His heart was without joy that those who should stand in stead for him, if right fared aright, were bent to betray him. The gate stood open still, and all his folk were asleep. He tied his horse in its stall and went to his sleeping chamber before any man heard or saw it. When he had done off his weapons the watchman stood on the high turret and blew in the day, that came in fair. Then awoke many a man that God had given sleep to while the King went stealing: that was good hap for him. Then King Charles sent one of his

chamberlains for his privy council, and he told how it stood with him: that he knew beforehand that his death was sworn by Eggerick of Eggermond, who would come shortly with all the strength of the country to do him the wrong of taking his life; and he asked them to give him advice so that he might retain his honor and they, their rightful lord.

Then said the Duke of Bavaria, "Let them come; they will find us here. It shall cost many of them their lives. I give thee good counsel: here is many a Frankish knight and warrior that hath come hither with thee into this land; let them all arm themselves together and go into the great hall, and thou, O King, shalt stand armed within the circle. He who would harm thee there shall fare ill: his blood will run down to his spurs,—Eggerick's also, first of all." This counsel seemed good to him. They armed themselves with all speed, all that might avail thereto and might bear weapons, great and small. They feared great opposition, for Eggerick was very mighty, and all those that had great power up and down the Rhine desired to help him. Sixty men were stationed at the gate, armed and clad in hauberks. When Eggerick's men came to the court in great bands they opened the gate wide and let them all pass through. When they came into the court their garments were stripped off, and men found next to their bodies white hauberks and sharp knives. Their crime was revealed. Then they were taken captive even as they came, until all of them were seized. Eggerick came with the last troop, he from whom the plan for murder had proceeded. When he was dismounted, and weened to go into the great hall, the gate was quickly closed. He was taken with all his men. They found his body better armed than any other that was there. He was led to the palace before his lord the King, whereof he might have great shame. A great charge the King put upon him, but he would hear none of it: he denied the crime, and said,

"Lord King, be thou better advised! If thou didst me undeserved shame thou wouldst lose many a friend. Thou

thyself art not so bold, nor any of thy barons, that any of you durst maintain against me that I have betrayed thee. If any desired to do this I would make him deny it with my sword or the point of my spear. Now let any man that wills it come forward!"

When the King perceived this he was blithe in his heart, and swiftly he sent messengers, one after another, to Elegast, where he abode in the wood; and he bade him come with all speed, for he forgave him all he had misdone; if he would stand combat against Eggerick, he would be made a rich man. The messengers erred not, but did as they were told. They went straightway to the place where they might find Elegast, and they told him all the King had said. He waxed right blithe of the words. When he heard the tale he let lie the saddle that he stole of Eggerick, without more delay; and therewith he commanded that they lead him to Charles, for he would publish abroad Eggerick's crime. He swore by his faith, if God owed him aught by prayer, that he desired no other good than that he might do this combat in behalf of his just lord, and uphold his honor for him.

With all speed they started. When the good knight Elegast came into the King's hall he spake even as ye shall hear:

"God keep this company," quoth he, "and the King I find here with it! But Eggerick I greet not. May almighty God, Who let Himself be crucified for us, and Mary eke, the sweet maid, grant that I see Eggerick of Eggermond hung up this day before the wind. If God might do sin it is done in this, that he is so long escaped from the gallows, for that he swore my lord's death, without urgency or need." When Elegast said this, Eggerick had gladly avenged it, but he might not, for there were many there to hinder him. Thereat the King answered,

"Welcome be thou to my court! Now I adjure thee by all the duty that a good man owes, that thou tell us and reveal the crime and murder of this Eggerick that thou

seest here: for no man shalt thou omit to tell the truth, and nought else, of how the adventure befell." Elegast said,

"Gladly, lord; I may not avoid it. I am well assured beforehand that Eggerick hath sworn thy death: I heard him say it as he lay and gave his wife a blow, for that she durst take it ill, so that the blood burst from her nose and mouth and teeth. She raised herself up and leaned her face over the bed's edge. I was near by, and I was aware of it; I crept up softly, and caught the lady's blood in my right glove." Then he showed it to the King and all who willed to see it. "If Eggerick durst deny this, I will make him confess the deed between us two at once, before the sun goes down, or I shall forfeit my life." Thereat Eggerick gave answer,

"This wrong may not befall me, nor should it be pleasing to anyone that I adventure my neck with an outlawed thief. Better he should fight with his fellows than with me." Elegast replied anon,

"Yea, and am I not a duke even as thou? Though I was for a time banished, and the King took from me my goods, for that he was angered with me, I have not had ado with treachery and murder. Much goods I have taken from the rich; poverty and need caused me to. But since thou art a murderer, thou mayest not deny combat or battle to any man in the world who would maintain a cause against thee in combat." Thereat the King answered and said to him,

"By my faith, thou sayest true! If I did rightly I would have a knave drag him hence and hang him by the neck." Now the game turned against Eggerick, and he thought to himself, "Better a combat than a broken neck." There was no man in the court that durst speak in his behalf. Thus a combat was undertaken there. A little after noon the King commanded his barons to fare out into the field all weaponed, for he would not miss the combat. He had the circle made ready, and he prayed God to decide the

strife according to justice and right.—God gave ear to his prayer. Charles comforted Elegast, and told him that if that combat went well, and he were living still, he would give him the sister that had been Eggerick's before, who swore his death.

Ropes were put up on that field, where many a man stood weaponed. A little before the time of vespers Elegast came first into the circle, since he was the accuser. He dismounted on the grass and knelt to pray. He said,

"In the name of Thy mercy, O God, I come to ask grace for all my misdeeds that ever I did on this earth. I know what I have done wrong; but, merciful and almighty God, avenge not my sins upon me this day. By Thy five holy wounds Thou didst receive through our misdeed, take care of me this day so that I die not, nor fall in combat. If my sins strike me not, I ween that I may go safe. O perfect God, I pray thee by Thy might, protect me. And thou, Mary, sweet lady, I will serve thee in true faith, nor ever again be robber or thief in the forests and desert places, if I may retain my life here." When he had done his prayer he crossed his limbs, and with his right hand he crossed his knightly garb in comely wise, and the horse also that stood before him, and he prayed God of His grace that he might bear him with honor and be permitted to return from the combat. As he said this he mounted into his saddle—a great strife drew near—and with his shield hung on the left side he took his spear in hand. And Eggerick came right readily to the circled space: he was well armed, and fierce was his heart. He crossed himself not, nor did any prayer to God. He struck hard with his spurs and rode on Elegast; and Elegast rode on him again, and thrust him through the leather of his cuirass with such force that he fell down on the earth from his horse upon the field. Eggerick grasped his sword and drew it from the sheath, and he said,

"Now shall I kill both thee and thy horse, unless thou descend to the earth straightway: then thy horse may live

still! It is so strong and great that it were a pity for me to strike it dead: many a man would lament it. Though thou must die, thou canst save thy horse." Elegast spoke at once,

"If thou wert not now afoot, I would end this strife. I will not strike thee down afoot: I will gain honor by thee, though I fare the worse for it. Mount again on thy horse, and let us combat as knights. I had liever that men praise me than that I shamefully strike thee, though I should remain on the field."

King Charles liked it little that Elegast delayed so long and spared Eggerick. Anon Eggerick took his steed again: when Elegast spoke, he sat upon his saddle again. Then there arose a combat until long after vesper-time. No man had ever seen so fell a strife within one day. Their blows were furious; their helmets burned like fire with the sparks that sprang from them. Both of them were dukes that fought there; although Elegast had had the disgrace of losing his land, still he remained a duke even as he had been before.

Then spake the King of France: "God, even as Thou hast the might in this place, do thou end this strife and combat according to justice and right." Elegast had a sword that was worth its value in fine red gold to a man in need; the King had given it to him. Elegast lifted it up and smote so mighty a blow, by our Lord's help and the prayer that King Charles made for him, that he struck from Eggerick the greater half of his head, and he fell dead from his saddle. The King beheld this and said,

"Thou true God Who art above us, rightly may I praise Thee, Who hast done me so much honor. Wise are those who serve Thee; Thou helpest and counsellest those that seek grace of Thee."

Now will I end this tale. They dragged thence Eggerick and hanged him, and all the traitors with him; no prayer and no treasure might help them. Elegast remained in honor, for which he gave thanks to God our Lord. The

King gave him Eggerick's wife, and they abode together all their life. Thus may God make good all our fortunes before our death. The Heavenly Father grant us this! And now let us all together say

AMEN.

THE TRISTAN LEGEND

INTRODUCTION TO THE TRISTAN LEGEND

One of the most popular stories of the Middle Ages was the tale of the tragic love of Tristan and Isold, joined by a fate beyond their control, but separated by circumstance and convention. It tells of the youthful exploit of Tristan, nephew of King Mark, in killing a gigantic Irish knight sent to Mark's kingdom of Cornwall to collect tribute: how Tristan was wounded in that encounter by a poisoned spear, how his wound refused to heal, how he was set adrift over the seas in a little boat, landed in Ireland, was succored and cured by the niece of the man he had killed, and returned home to his uncle Mark without being recognized by his enemies. It continues with the account of Tristan's second voyage to Ireland, this time in quest of a bride for his uncle; how he won Isold by killing a dragon; how he brought her home to Cornwall, and how in mid-ocean, through no fault of their own, they drank together of a love-potion which had been intended for King Mark and the bride. This drink sealed their fate and condemned them to a life of frustrated desire, surreptitious meetings, plots, deceit, discovery, and exile. The later course of the story abounds in situations of suspense and in clever devices for the deception of King Mark. In the end, Tristan, having married a second Isold in Brittany, is wounded once more by a poisoned spear and sends to Isold of Cornwall to cure him. The royal leach arrives too late, and Isold sinks down beside the body of her lover in death.

The kernel of this tale was, if we may judge from similar episodes in Old Irish tradition, a Celtic legend of an elopement of the wife and nephew of a king, their life and wanderings in the wilderness, and their death at the end of a long pursuit by the king. To this simple scheme much has been added; although several later stages may be detected, the general outline of the medieval story as we have it was probably established by some one poet, at least down to the end of the exile of Tristan and Isold in the forest, from which they later return: he to go into Brittany,

where he marries the second Isold; Isold of Cornwall to be received back by King Mark. Originally they did not come back from this exile, but were probably killed together in the forest. The plot up to this point shows too much artistic planning and too much unity of mood and method for it to be the result of haphazard growth or accretion.

The oldest extant versions are two Old French fragments, written in the latter part of the twelfth century by Béroul and Thomas respectively. Although they differ in details, they are close enough to convince us that they were both derived from a common source that was also written in Old French. This hypothetical version is called the *estoire,* and it was probably composed by some bilingual poet who took over the Celtic tale, added a supplement concerning Tristan's wife (who was not an original character) and Tristan's death in Brittany, and also a preface concerning his childhood. This same poet, no doubt a Frenchman, must have been responsible also for the chivalric atmosphere, the development of episodes dealing with the deception of King Mark by the lovers, the introduction of manners and customs of the eleventh century, and the connection of the tale with King Arthur.

The versions of Béroul and Thomas are, then, of primary importance in the historical study of the legend, for they are the oldest and stand closest to the *estoire.* There were many other derivative treatments during the Middle Ages: the rugged *Tristrand und Isalde* of Eilhard von Oberge; the refined psychological romance of Gottfried von Strassburg, which is one of the masterpieces of medieval literature; a greatly condensed version in Middle English verse; and prose redactions in various languages, among which must be reckoned Malory's treatment in his *Mort d'Arthur.* In modern times, too, the legend has received distinguished treatment by more than one great poet.

There is no place here for an exhaustive bibliography of works on the Tristan story, which has attracted the attention of some of the greatest scholars in the field of medieval literature. But a few of the titles at least may be mentioned. Any student who is interested in the literary history of the legend, and the scholarly problems involved, will need to consult Bédier's edition of the version of Thomas for the Société des Anciens Textes Français; Golther's *Tristan und Isolde* (Leipzig, 1907); and Gertrude Schoepperle's *Tristan and Isold* (Frankfurt and London, 1913).

A delightful survey of the whole field, containing long extracts in the original languages and in modern German translation, together with many illustrations taken from medieval art, is contained in Friedrich Ranke's *Tristan und Isold,* which is the third volume of the series *Bücher des Mittelalters.*

The originals of these translations are: Muret's edition of Béroul in the *Classiques Français du Moyen Age;* Bédier's edition of *La Folie Tristan* (the text of the Berne MS); and the Icelandic ballad as published in Ranke's book. In conjunction with these it is recommended that the student read Loomis's translation of Thomas's *Tristan* and Jessie L. Weston's version of Gottfried von Strassburg (a condensation).

FROM BÉROUL'S ROMANCE OF TRISTAN

(The extant fragment of Béroul's poem begins with a scene in which Tristan, having been exiled from the court of King Mark, his uncle, arranges to meet Isold in the castle garden. His enemies learn of this, and post Mark in a tree to observe the lovers. After Tristan has given the signal for Isold to come, he perceives the shadow of the King in the waters of a fountain beneath the tree. Isold realizes by his behavior that they are being observed.)

.....[1]
And knew her lover; but the Queen
Approached him with a stately mien,
And made as if she saw no thing.
"Great wrong is this, by Heaven's King,"
She said, "to ask for speech with me
So very late, Sir Tristan!" She
Made semblant to weep bitterly.
.....
.....
"By Him Who made the sea and sky,
Ask it no more of me, for I
Must tell thee straitly, Tristan, this
Shall not be done again, y-wis.
I may not come again; the King
Suspects that love and wantoning
Binds me to thee; but truly I
Appeal to God that if I lie,
He may inflict His scourge on me,—
For I have kept me loyally

[1] Lacunæ in the manuscript are indicated by dots.

And true to him who had me ere
As maid first yielded: this I swear!
And if the dastards of this realm—
The ones for whom thou didst on helm
And sword to lay Sir Morhold low—
Cause him to think our love stands so,
That, Sir, is not by will of thee,
Nor do I wish for druerie
That leads to shame and treachery.
Rather were this my body burned
And all its cinders lightly spurned
Upon the winds in ashen dust
Ere any day I break my trust
Or give my love to any wight
Except my lord. God, if he might
Be brought to doubt me, I must cry
That I am low who once was high.
Sir, truly spake King Solomon:
A thief who has been rescued from
The gallows, seldom loves the folk
Who lightened him of that dread yoke;
And if the dastards of this realm.....
.....
Would need to keep it hid from us.
Much evil thou wouldst suffer thus.
I healed thee of a grievous sore
Thou hadst in battle long before,
Fighting mine uncle: there is nought
To wonder at, if thus I bought
Thy friendship and thy love for this.
But they have told the King, y-wis,
The love thou showest me is base.
Let them beware! Before God's face
And in His realm they have no place.
And Tristan, henceforth thou beware
To summon me forth anywhere:
I may not risk to see thee here

Nor elsewhere, Tristan, and I fear
That even now I stay too long.
I may be punished, though no wrong
Is done by me, for if the King
Knew but a whisper of this thing,
My body would be torn apart
And death would be my certain part.
Sir Tristan, of a certainty
He knows not that my love for thee
Is only what is owing to
Kinsman of his: no more than due
To one who shares his parenthood.
My mother eke, as well she should,
Loved the kinsmen of my sire,
And said, a wife's love would require
Love for her spouse's kin as well.
True were those words I heard her tell.
Sir, I have loved thee for his sake,
But lost his love therewith. I take....
.....
.....

".....should do
If folk have so beguiled him to
Believe this falsehood said of us."

"What wouldst thou say in speaking thus?
My lord the King is courteous;
He would not think of this alone:
Others have meddled in their own
Base thought with his thought; thus a man
May lead another; thus he can
Cause him to leave the good for ill.
Thus with my lord they do their will.
But I have over-stayed; I go!"

"Dear lady, for the love of God, not so!
I asked for thee, and thou hast come;
Stay then, and hear my orison:
Thou hast been always dear to me."

Now Tristan, when he heard the Queen
Speak in this wise, knew she had seen
The pit in time, and they were saved.
So he gave thanks to God, and craved
His mercy for what might betide.
"Ah, royal princess," Tristan cried,
"Courteous lady, wise and free,
These many times I sent to thee
Since I was told to quit my place
And could no longer have the grace
To speak with thee. Ah, lady, see:
In my distress I cry to thee—
Have pity on my misery!
Great dole is mine that I must know
The King thinks evil of thee so
Unjustly, and because of me.
Like death this sorrow that I dree.
Lady, ...
..... I thought
He was too prudent to be caught
By liars, who, to spite him, sent
Me into cruel banishment.
The dastard barons of Cornwall
Are blithe and evil-hearted all:
For now I certainly surmise
They would not brook in any wise
One near the King who also stood
Close to himself in parenthood.
His marriage put a check on me.
Lord! But the King doth foolishly!
Upon a tree may I be hung

In shameful wise, if I have won
The right to love thee *paramour*.
I had no chance to make me pure
Of this false charge, but in his ire
He closed his ears to me entire,
Believing evil councillors.
He is deceived by flatterers.
But they were silent sometime since
What time Sir Morhold came, the prince,
And none of them had heart to wage
The battle, or take up the gage.
Heavy of cheer my uncle went:
His life and hope were wholly shent.
I put on armor for his sake
And I went forth to undertake
The combat for him; and I won.
And now, methinks, it is well done
To credit leasings told of me!
My heart is sorely vexed, and he,
Surely he cannot fail to know
That he doth wrong in doing so.
For God's sake, born of Sainte Marie,
Lady, I implore of thee,
Tell him to build a fire, and I
Will gladly enter it, to try
My guiltlessness of what is said;
If but a hair is burnt, I wed,
Of that hair shift that I shall wear,
Then let the flame consume me there:
This is the only test to try
My innocence; though I defy
The knights to combat, surely none
Will dare to fight as champion.
Lady, of thy courtesy,
Hast thou no heart to pity me?
I cry thee mercy to this end:
Be intercessor with my friend.

When once I came from overseas
. . . . . .
Return to those same seigneuries."

"My lord, thou dost most wrongfully,
Speaking of this affair to me,
And asking that I undertake
To discourse with him for thy sake
And turn his wrath to gentleness.
I do not wish to die; no less
I am unwilling, I confess,
To be destroyed by evil chance.
The King already looks askance
Upon us two, and if I should
Plead for thee now, my hardihood
Would be foolhardiness, I trow.
Tristan, thou hast no right, I vow
To put this task into my hand.
I am alone in foreign land:
Thou hast been put in banishment
Because of me, and if I went
And spoke to him in this wise, he
Would think me light of wit, pardee.
No word of it will come from me.
And yet I tell thee one thing true:
Fair Sir, could one persuade him to
Remit his anger, I should be
Rejoiced to hear it, heartily.
But if he knew this unwise deed
Of ours, no rescuing, I rede,
Could stay our death from us, indeed!
The thought of this will rob my sleep!
If anyone beheld thee creep
Unto this trysting place, I fear
The King will also shortly hear
Of our encounter here, and I
Will surely be condemned to die
By fire, before a burning stake.

So great my terror is, I quake
At thought of it: my fear is strong;
Methinks I tarry over-long,
For very fear I must be gone!"

Isold hath turned; he cried aloud:
"Lady, by Him Who put the shroud
Of flesh upon Him in a maid,
Let not my prayer be gainsaid!
Give me good rede, for charity!
I know thou dar'st not stay for me,
But there is none to help but thee.
Well do I know the King's deep hate
That hath reversed my fair estate:
Let me but have delivery
From that mistrust, and I shall flee
Out of this land. I may consort
Myself as knight at any court
Upon the earth where princes reign,
For any king would gladly gain
The services of one like me.
And if I hear nought, and if he
Remains unbending, nor is brought
Within a year to change his thought,
I ask no further feigning then!
Think of me, Queen Isold! Again
I pray thee: clear me with my sire!"

"I marvel that thou canst require,
Sir Tristan, such a task of me,
For surely there is jeopardy
In this thy counsel: it were ill
Advised of me to do thy will,
Nor is thy asking leal of thee.
Thou knowest, one who hath misdoubt
Of evil, will be sure of it without
True knowledge: folly makes him thus.
But by our Father glorious,
Who made the sky and sea and us,

If he should ever hear that thou
Art fallen quit-gage, then I trow
This thing would be too clearly couth:
I have no heart for that, in truth."

The Queen hath turned and left him so:
Tristan cried out to her in woe
And anguish; on the marble stone
He leaned himself, and wept alone:

"Ah God, this loss is over-great!
I had not thought to meet this fate,
A fugitive in poverty!
No arms and steed remain to me,
Nor any friend but Governal!
A man who hath been known to fall
Receives from others scanty store
Of love and cheer; but evermore
I shall be outcast now from men.
To other lands I go, and when
Knights are assembled to discourse
Of battle, I must sit perforce
In silence, for I dare not speak.
This suffering hath made me meek,
That comes from fortune's jealousy.
Fair uncle, he who doubteth me
Together with thy wife, knows not
....."

The King, who listened in the tree,
Saw their encounter privily,
And heard the reason of their speech.
And now he feels remorse for each,
And pity for them; he is fain
To let his tears fall down like rain
And weep for sorrow at their pain.
He hates the dwarf of Tintagel
Who led him there: "I see right well,"

The King hath said, "that by deceit
He brought me here to this retreat
And made me mount into this tree.
Truly he hath put shame on me.
He hath been telling foul untruth
About my nephew; but in sooth
He shall be hanged on a gallows-tree.
He hath been but deceiving me;
He bade me lower here and wait
Merely to bring my Queen in hate:
And I believed him, like a fool.
His guerdon shall be woe and dule:
If I may lay my hands on him
He shall be burnt by fire: more grim
His death shall be than Constantine
Ere gave to Segoçon, I ween:
He twinned him from his head and life
When he had found him by his wife.
He had made her the queen of Rome
And crowned her on the royal throne
And many noble men there were
To wait on her; he cherished her
And honored her, but for her sin
She wept the evil she fell in."

Tristan no longer was where he
Had stood; the King hath left the tree
Resolving in his spirit how
He would believe his wife enow,
And doubt the men who caused him to
Believe of her what was untrue,
For he had proved its falsity.
Now hath he sworn that surely he
Will give the dwarf a meet reward
And strike him with his goodly sword
To silence all his treachery.
He will not look suspiciously

Upon his wife and nephew now,
Nor further doubt them, but allow
Them freedom in their parleying.

"At last I know the very thing
As it hath stood: if otherwise,
They had not parted in the guise
That they appeared in; if there were
Unfitting love, what would deter
The two from kisses and embrace?
In sooth, they had enow of space
And time to do it in, and yet
All that I heard was their regret
And sorrow, and I must suppose
They had no heart for aught but those.
Why did I credit ill of them?
A man is charged with folly when
He hearkens to what all folk say:
Better if I had made essay
Of those two speakers than that I
Had fallen prey unto their lie.
After this evening-tide I ought
No longer cherish somber thought,
But when day comes I will recall
Tristan to me: within my hall
He shall be free to come at will
As he was wont to do, until
This evil chanced: thus ends the flight
It was his wish to make this night."

Now hearken, for I will begin
To tell you of the dwarf Frocin:
He was without, and in the heaven
He saw the stars and planets seven:
He knew their courses well, for he
Was practiced in astrology.
He could foretell from time of birth
What would befall a child on earth

So long as it beheld the light.
The dwarf, who was fulfilled of spite,
Tried by his learning to descry
Who was the man would make him die
By torture, for upon the sky
He read the proof that it must be.
With rage he swelled up suddenly,
Knowing the anger of the King
Was dangerous and threatening.
With fear he is possessed: he pales,
And turns his face in flight to Wales.
The King let seek him, but Frocin
Was hidden well, to Mark's chagrin.

Isold hath sought her bower again,
And there she found her maid Brangain,
Who, seeing her distraught and pale,
Knew that the Queen had heard some tale
That filled her heart with great dismay.
She bade her speak without delay.
The Queen replied: "Alas, dear maid,
Good cause have I to be afraid
And heavy hearted, for I fear
There hath been treason working here;
I know not whose the treachery,
But Mark was hidden in the tree
That stands above the marble stair:
I saw his shadow clearly there,
Upon the waters of the spring,
And I began the parleying:
By God's good grace I was the one
Who spoke the first. When I had done
I promise thee, he had not heard
Of what I sought, a single word,
Nor what had been my true intent
In coming out,—but sore lament
And groans, and feigned distress from me.

I wept and blamed him heavily
For summoning me to that place,
And he implored me, of my grace,
To reconcile him with his lord
And help him to the old accord
That had been reft mistakenly
Between the two, because of me.
I told him he did foolishly
To ask so great a thing of me;
I could not see him evermore
Nor plead his suit for him before
The King,—and many speeches more
There were, and much that I forget.
So I have freed me from the net.
The King could surely not perceive
That I have spoken to deceive."

When she heard this, Brangain was glad:
"Isold, my lady, God hath had
Great mercy on us, truth to say,
Since he hath let thee come away
In safety from that parlement,
Without betraying thine intent.
Great miracle the Lord hath done,
For He, true Father, is not one
To let an evil chance befall
Those who are loyal to him, all."

Tristan likewise told his tale
To Governal, who did not fail
To give God thanks wholeheartedly
That Tristan had advisedly
Refrained from more with his *amie*.

(After Tristan is recalled from exile, his enemies plot afresh to destroy him by betraying him and the Queen to King Mark. They are finally successful: the lovers are caught and condemned to death.)

The King hath threatened Tristan sore,
And those three barons stood before
His bed, to seize him angrily,
And eke the Queen with him. The three
Reviled and blamed her, and they swore
That justice should be done before
They made an end of them. They cried,
"This wound of thine that bleeds so wide
Is proof enough, and thou art caught!"
The King said, "It will help thee nought
To make denial, Tristan: thou
Shalt die to-morrow morn, I vow."

"Have pity on us two," he cried,
"By our Lord God Who for us died,
Have pity!" But those evil men
Urged vengeance on him, and again
Tristan implored, "I do not care
What may befall me, uncle: there
Is no doubt I am in ill case;—
Saving thine anger, in the chase
I bought this wound full dear, else they
Had never dared to make essay
Of laying hands upon us: thee
I hold more free of treachery.
But be it well or be it ill,
Do with me what may be thy will,
And I will suffer it; but take
Pity on her for God's dear sake,
Pity the Queen! If anyone
Within this house should say I've done
Evil with her, or sinful love,
In arms I'll meet him; but above
All else, for God's love, this I pray:
Pity the Queen!" But quickly they,
The three who stood there, bound his hands,
And eke the Queen's, in tightened bands,

Most hatefully. If Tristan knew
That they would not permit him to
Make vindication in armed strife
He would have offered up his life
Rather than let them bind him fast.
But he believed that at the last,
If he had ordeal, none would dare
To offer combat to him there;
For he believed, if it befell
To fight a combat, he might well
Defend himself, and therefore he
Refrained from doing violently
Before the King; but if he knew
What would befall, and what was due
To them, he would have killed the three,
Nor might the King have saved them. He
Had better done, God knows, to kill
His foes, lest they should work him ill.

And now throughout the town a cry
Is lifted up: the two must die
Together, who had done this thing,
And had been taken so: the King
Was bent upon destroying them.
Then there was weeping among men,
And they lamented, great and small:
"Alas, Sir Tristan! We have all
Great cause to sorrow, valiant knight!
May those three villains suffer blight
Who took thee by betraying thee!
Alas! Thou Queen so fair and free,
Is any king's child like thy peer
In all the countries far and near?
Ah, dwarf! Thy spying hath done this!
May he be outcast from God's bliss
Who finds that felon, and doth not
Smite him to death upon the spot!

Alas, Sir Tristan! Fair good friend,
Thou shalt have weeping without end
When thou hast perished and art slain.
When Morhold came to us, and fain
Would take our children thence in fee,
Our barons bore it silently,
Nor was there one who was so strong
To fight with him to right that wrong;
But thou didst take the fight on thee,
And set the folk of Cornwall free,
For thou didst slay him, never fear.
The Morhold smote thee with a spear,
And thus thy life was nearly spent.
Yea, we ought never give consent
That that same life should now be spilled."

With their outcry the place was filled,
And to the palace gate they ran.
The King was angered, and no man
Among his barons was so brave
That he might plead with him to save
Those two, nor pardon what they did.
Day came, and now the King hath bid
His folk to dig a pit, and seek
For store of bramble-wood, and eke
For roots of black-thorn and of white.
And now the day was wholly light
And through the town the banns were cried
To summon all folk far and wide,
And they came running with all speed.
Great was the clamor there, I rede,
And all lamented what befell,
Saving the dwarf of Tintagel.
The King hath told them his desire:
He is resolved that on a pyre
His wife and nephew shall be burnt.
And when the Cornish folk had learnt

That this must be, they cried to him:
"Lord, this would be too great a sin
Unless they first be judged;" they cried
"Have mercy!" but the King replied
In wrath, "By Him that made the world
Though I should be therefor out-hurled
From my inheritance, I shall not spare
The judgment that awaits them there,
To burn upon that faggot-heap,
Although with questioning ye keep
Imploring me: pray let me be!"
He bade them light the fire, for he
Resolved that Tristan should be hent
The first, and brought to punishment.

They led him hand-bound on the way;
Lord! Villainously fell were they!
He wept, but little it availed,
For still in shameful wise they haled
Him onward to the King. Isold
Wept with more wrath than can be told:
"Tristan," she cried, "great shame is this,
That thou art bound and dragged, y-wis!
If I might die and thus save thee
I'd yield my life up joyously,
Fair friend of mine, for then we might
Have vengeance for this shameful plight!

Hearken, seigneurs, to this tale.
Great is God's pity, without fail;
He would not have a sinner die.
He heard the weeping and the cry
Made by the folk for those who went
To suffer death in such torment.
Upon the way, as they fared by,
They passed a chapel built on high;
Upon a mount it was, and sheer
The rock and chancel were above the mere.

Outside there was no thing but cliff
Of stone, and shore beneath it: if
A man foolhardily should try
To leap from it, he needs must die
And never know recovery.
A colored window, fair to see
Was wrought there by a holy man
In ages past. Tristan began
To beg of them as they passed by:
"My lords, in short space I must die,
And gladly I would enter in
This chapel, and for every sin
That I have done before God, pray
For mercy on my final day.
The chapel has one only door,
My lords: let each man stand before
The entrance with his naked blade;
And when my orisons are made
I must return by this same way."
Then each to other 'gan to say,
"Surely this may be granted him."
They cut his bands; he entered in.
Down to the altar Tristan paced
And reached the window in all haste:
He thrust it open with his hand,
And leaped down to the ocean strand.
Rather he chose this death, than he
Be burnt before men shamefully.
Seigneurs, there was a mighty stone
Out-thrust on that cliff's face alone,
And down on it Sir Tristan leapt.
The wind smote on his cloak, and kept
Him buoyed from over-sudden fall.
Unto this day, folk in Cornwall
Speak of that rock as Tristan's Leap.
The press within the church was deep,
And all of them knelt down, when he

Sprang from that window suddenly.
The guards await for him in vain,
For he will not come back again.
Great was God's pity on his need!
He fled along the shore with speed,
In mighty leaps: but small desire
Hath he to go back where the fire
Is burning for him. Fast he fled,—
None could go faster than he sped.

Now hearken while I tell the tale
Of Governal: with sword and mail
And with his steed he took his flight,
For well he knew that if they might
Discover him, the King would doom
Him to the fire in Tristan's room.
He fled away for very fear.
Governal held his master dear,
And when he took his own sword, he
Saved Tristan's also, loyally.
Tristan beheld him coming near
And called to him, that he might hear
Him cry, and hasten to him straight.
When they were met their joy was great.
"Master, God pitied me this day:
I have escaped and fled away.
Unhappy me! What have I sought?
Without Isold I care for nought.
When I leaped from that chapel, why
Did I remain unskilled to die?
I have escaped that death, and yet
This will yield nothing but regret.
Isold is burning! I am free!
I'll die for her, as she for me,
For all my flight has been in vain."
Said Governal, "My lord, restrain
Thy wrath, and let me comfort thee.

A bush there is before us, see,
And dug about it lies a pit.
Sir, let us hide ourselves in it,
For many people pass so near
We shall discover tidings here.
If she is burned, do thou forsake
The halls of kings, unless thou take
Bitter revenge within short space,
And I will help thee, by the grace
Of Jesus Who was Mary's Son.
I will not cease till I have won
Vengeance and death upon the three
Who have destroyed thy fair *amie.*
If thou shouldst die before that day,
My joy were ended, by my fay!"

(Tristan and Governal rescue Isold from the lepers to whom Mark had consigned her, as a more cruel punishment than death by fire. The three dwell in exile in the forest together.)

Seigneurs, ye have heard me tell
How Tristan and Isold la Belle
Drank a potion on the sea,
A drink of so great potency,
For many years they suffered pain
And exile: Queen Isold had fain
Charged that wine with so great strength
Its might persisted through the length
Of three long years: thus she beguiled
Not King Mark, but her own child.
While these three years of pain endured
No two lovers might be cured:
Neither one in suffering
Could think: "I weary of this thing."

After St. John's day was past
The primal power might not last

In that herbed drink: Tristan rose
And lightly donned his hunting clothes;
Left the Queen within their bower
And chased a stag until that hour,
In its third anniversary
Had come again, since he and she
Had stood together on the ship's
Broad deck, the love-drink at their lips.
Suddenly he paused and spoke:
"What charm is this I have not broke
In three long years? And still I go
Tormented by an ancient woe . . .
I have abandoned chivalry,
The honor and the revelry
Of holding court; I live apart,
An exile from my uncle's heart:
The King had surely held me dear
If I had not misused him; here
I live far from my barony
And noble men who once served me,
Gladly fighting by my side,
A hundred strong, until they died.
This exile too must irk the Queen
Who left her palace for this mean,
Poor forest fare: as King Mark's wife
She has lived a gentler life;
Dwelling in a royal court
She had dames for her disport;
Spacious chambers, richer fare,
And silken hangings everywhere.
God, give me strength, and let me send
Her home again, to make amend:
If God permits this thing to be,
Mark shall receive her back from me."

(Thus the way is made ready for the return of Isold to King Mark.)

TRISTAN'S FOLLY

Betwixt the court and Tristan there
Is bitter feud: he knows not where
He may find hostel .....
.....
For Mark his fear is very great,
Knowing his anger and his hate
That threaten him: let him beware,
For if King Mark might seize him, there
Would be small gain from his descent
And noble birth; he would be hent
And judged to death. The King cried out
Against the shame so noised about
Among his barons openly,
And of this wrong of Tristan he
Made plaint: he called a gathering
Of nobles, and displayed the thing
That Tristan had done wrongly towards
His honor, and he said, "My lords,
What is it best for me to do?
Great ill I hold it, and great rue
That I am lacking vengeance still
Like one that is befooled in will,
For he is fled so far from hence
That he escapes our vigilance.
Greatly this grieves me, and if some
Of you should find him, or have won
Knowledge of him, I pray you all
To tell me of it. He of Cornwall,
Holy Saint Samson, knows that he
Who renders Tristan unto me

Will do me so great service, I
Shall hold him dear until I die."

No baron is there who doth fail
To promise all that may avail
For seizing him. Dinas alone
Laments with many a heartfelt groan
The lot of Tristan; for his sake
Are grief and anger still awake
Within his heart; and privily
He finds a messenger, and he
Hath bid him make Sir Tristan wit
The hatred of the King; how it
Is bent on evil guerdon for
Tristan's delight and joy before.
Mark was made ware by jealousy,
And great his anger was to see.

When Tristan heard this tale relate,
Wit ye, his pleasure was not great:
He dared not enter in the land
From which he had been often banned
And fled as exile; deep is his woe
Because Isold is distant, though
Isold there be, another one,—
Not she it is who had begun
At first to be his loved *amie*.
He taketh thought, and zealously
He meditates what he may do
To send for her and draw her to
Himself-ward, for he dare not go
Himself to her. "I suffer so
Because of love and destiny,"
He cried; "yet uncomplainingly
I have endured love's pain, nor asked
Why I am wounded and o'er-tasked
Because of love: ah God, it is
A bitter thing, methinks, that this

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Then why not yield what is desired?
Nay; for I left one over-mired
With ill and shame because of me:
She who hath suffered cruelly.
Alas," quoth he, "unhappiness
Engirds me, and the same distress
Hath ever been tormenting me.—
Most beautiful she is to see
In all the world: and if I should
Be forfeit of the worthihood
Of being loved by loving less,
Wretched I'd be, and honorless!
Love, who is lord of all things, still
Owes me the granting of my will
To have her and my heart's desire.
It shall be done, by God our Sire:
To Him I make my prayer that I
May have her once before I die,
But once again!—She made me whole
And cured the wound I had to thole.
God, let me live until I see
Her looking well and joyously!
Most dear-worth thing to me it were
To have some knowledge more of her.
God, of his goodness, give her store
Of health and pleasure, more and more,
And grant me, if at all I may,
Again to see her: this I pray,
Lord! to behold her once again!
Ah! I am little feared of men,
Most wretched and most mazed am I!
What if, no more before I die
I am to see her, nor she me?
For her I fear unceasingly,
And suffer also, day and night,

And evermore, without respite.
What if I die ere it may be?
Of old she gently cared for me,
And healed the wound that Morhold gave
Upon an island, where a nave
Had brought me for the combat to
Dispute the right of truage due
From those who dwelt within that land.
The feud was ended by my brand.
I'd hold me coward if I let
Myself be hindered by a threat
Or fear, to go in some disguise
Or folly's habit. In this wise
I may be hidden: I shall shear
And shave me, for indeed I fear
That I am known too well to be
Preserved from sudden treachery,
Unless I change my age at will,—
My dress and semblance. Not until
My strength is wholly overpast
Shall I stop seeking, to the last!"

When he had said, without delay
He made him ready for the way.
He left his country and his realm,
Lacking his hauberk and his helm,
And wandered forth unbrokenly
Until he stood beside the sea.
Great pain he suffered for her sake,
And will more travail undertake
And play the fool (I tell you this
In very sooth) and as Tantris
Disguise his name and self the more.
He passed the sea and farther shore.
He rent his clothes and scratched his face;
On every comer in that place
He struck a blow, by plan and rule,

Wishing to be despised as fool.
He shore off all his shining hair,—
There was no wight that saw him there
Upon the borders of the sea,
That thought not, "He is wondrously
Enraged or maddened, this same man!"
And yet they might not learn to scan
The purpose of his heart's intent.
He bore a fool's staff; as he went
People cried out, and at his head
Threw cutting stones. But Tristan sped
Unheedingly and hastily,
Caring for nought except that he
Sought for Isold, and lacking her
Desired but to seek out where she were.
Long time he had remained away
From court, but he no longer may
Forego it: he contrives to reach
The palace, for he will have speech
By some contrivance with the Queen.
When those who held the gates had seen
His semblance, he passed through the door
Unhindered, till he stood before
The King. His clothes were very poor;
Long-necked, high-shorn he was, and sure
Were all who saw him that his wit
Was lost in folly quite; but it
Was love that put him to this task.
King Mark began to speak and ask:
"What is thy name?" "Picol I hight."
"Who is thy sire?" "A valiant wight."
"Who was thy dame?" "A whale was she;
A sister I can bring to thee,
The maiden's name is Brunehold:
Thou shalt have her; I'll take Isold!"
"If we exchange, what wilt thou do?"
"What wouldst thou have? I'd lead her to

A dwelling made of roses' bloom;
Between the sky and clouds the room
Should be found for our mansion; there
Would be no coldness in the air
Where she and I take our delight.
But to these Welsh—God give them blight—
I have a further tale to tell.
King Mark, give ear; I know it well:
A drink there was which dame Brangain
Gave to Sir Tristan, and amain
He drank of it, and thereof grew
Great pain and torment for the two
Who tasted it. I see the Queen
Before me; she it was, I ween,
Who drank with me; if she denies
And says my words are merely lies,
I hold them then as idle dreams
That come to me at night, meseems.
King, thou art still deceived in me.
Look on my face more narrowly;
Regard me well and tell me this:
Am I not like unto Tantris?
For I have leaped, and I have cast
Twigs that were whittled, in the past;
Eaten of roots as forest fare
And held a Queen as lover there.—
More can I tell, if ye would know."
"Aggrieved am I thou speakest so.
Cease from thy boasts and take a rest,
Dan Picolet, for it were best."

"If thou art grieved I do not care
A straw for it." The knights stood there
And cried aloud, "No quarreling!"
"Dost thou recall," said he, "Sir King,
The forest bower where we were found,
And my sword, 'twixt us on the ground?

I counterfeited sleep for thee
Because I was afeared to flee.
The season was warm as month of May,
And through the bower came a ray
Of sun, and glittered on her face.
I saw thee well, for in that place
Thou didst hang up the glove, and then
Thou didst fare on thy way again.
I say no more; let this be all;
The rest thou mayest thyself recall."

Upon the Queen Mark bent his look;
She turned her head away, and took
Her mantle up to cover it.
"Thou fool, may evil fortune sit
Upon the ship that brought thee here!
Would they had cast thee in the mere,
The folk that ferried thee by sea!"
"An evil curse is this," quoth he;
"Dame, if thou wert more sure of me,
Thou wouldst uplift me by thy side;
Hadst thou my being well descried,
And well perceived, no bolt nor door
Could keep thee from me evermore,
No, nor commandment of the King.
I carry with me still the ring
That thou didst give me when we went
From our last weary parlement.
Evil the end that meeting had!
For since then, many a day unglad,
Many a hurt I've known, and pain.
Help me, lady, to regain
What I have lost of loving kiss,
Covered embrace, and lover's bliss.
Thou wilt comfort me in this,
Else I am dead for thee, y-wis.
Never Sir Yder, who slew the bear

Suffered so much for Guinevere,
King Arthur's wife, as I for thee.
For thy sake I left Brittany,
Passed into Spain and came away:
No friend of mine shall know it, nay,
Nor Kaherdin's sister find it out.
For thee I wandered far about,
Over land and over sea,
Seeking but the sight of thee.
If I should fail in my desire
My joy is reft from me entire;
I trust no further augury."
The knights who listened, standing near,
Whispered in each other's ear:
"This fool may even now prevail
Upon our Lord to heed his tale."

The King called for his steeds, for he
Was bent to ride at falconry;
His men went forth and left the hall:
Soon it was emptied of them all,
And Tristan leaned upon a seat.
The Queen withdrew and sought retreat
Within her chamber; she was fain
To summon there her maid Brangain.
"Hast thou," she said, "heard that fool rail,
And heard him tell his wondrous tale?
May evil droppings reach his ear!
To-day he hath roused up, I fear,
And reawakened my regret
For Tristan, whom I love, and yet
Must love, and love unendingly.
I fear he hath disdain of me
That keeps my pain forever new.
Seek out that fool and bid him to
Follow thee here for speech with me."

Straightway she sought the hall where he
Stood waiting; and with fitting mein
She said to him, "Dan Fool, the Queen
Asketh of thee a parleying.
Methinks it was an unwise thing
To tell us all that thou hast done
Throughout thy life: if thou wert hung
Because of it, it were not more
Than thou hast earned chastisement for!"
"Brangain, that were ill done, indeed:
There's many more mad goes riding a-steed."
"What devil and what devil's spite
Taught thee to know my name aright?"
"It hath been long time known to me;
And by my head, once fair to see,
From which right thinking has out-fled,
I am because of thee bestead
By folly now; and thine the deed.
Wherefore I ask of thee, and plead
That thou gain for me some reward
For all my faithful service toward
The Queen, though but in part: may she
Grant some requital unto me."

Thereat he groaned and deeply sighed.
Brangain had watched him, and she spied
The whiteness of his hands and feet,
The fairness of his arms, and neat
Proportions of his cincturing.
She thought it was some better thing
Than rage or madness ailed his heart.
"Sir Knight," she said, "for my own part,
I wish that God may honor thee
And grant thee joy, unless it be
Dishonor to the Queen or me.
Pardon me for these words, I pray:
They weigh not lightly, by my fay."

"I grant it; they weigh not on me."
Brangain made answer courteously:
"I pray thee then, have thy desire,
But only this I do require:
Take not the name of Tristan here."
"I may not yield thee that, I fear.
The potion that I drank hath wrought
So earnestly on mind and thought
That I am left with no desire
Save only what love may require.
God grant me some good end may come
Out of the ill-starred thing that's done!
My thoughts are changed to folly now
By evil hap, and it is thou,
Brangain, that wrought it, for that drink
Was made of magic herbs, I think.
I die for her, but she is spared,
And if our dolor be compared,
Unequal is it,—mine more great.
Tristan am I, and sad my fate."

Brangain at these word knew him well.
She cried him mercy, and she fell
Before his feet, and begged that he
Would pardon her her villeiny.
He lifted her up courteously
And kissed her often; and he prayed
That his desire be not delayed,
For she could help him, of her will.
She took his hand and led him till
They reached the chamber of the Queen.
Isold's hart trembled with the teen
And wrath his words had waked; but he
Greeted her fair and graciously.
"God save the Queen, and give her aid,
And also to Brangain her maid!"
He said to her: "If she had hight

Me merely friend, it would have quite
Restored me, for she is my friend
And I am hers, although she bend
But little pity on my woe.
Love has unfairly wrought it so
That mine must be a doubled share
Of all this suffering to bear.
In thirst and pain and homelessness
I have borne suffering and stress
Of spirit, burdened in my very heart;
Yet no wrong was there on my part.
May God, Who reigns eternally,
And was so courteous that He
Made wine from water for the sake
Of those at Cana,—may He take
Pity on me and make me free
Of this same madness that I dree!"

The Queen held silence still. Brangain,
Perceiving this, addressed her dame;
"Lady," she said, "what is this cheer
Thou showest him that standeth here—
The lealest lover that hath been?
Behold the pain his love is in
Because of thee, and see thou place
Thine arms about him in embrace.
For thee he came in fool's array
And shore his hair: I truly say
That this is Tristan, by my fay."
"Damsel, I fear thou art deceived.
Thou wouldst not have so soon believed
If thou hadst seen him when he came
Before the gates to-day, this same
Ill-mannered knave: if it were he,
He would not have made jest of me
So villein-like, before them all
Who sat together in the hall!

Better he were in the pit than there!"
"It was to keep them unaware
And duped by me, I bore me so.
Thy love torments me, and I know
Little enough of augury.
Lady, thou knewest Gamaren,—he
It was who made request for thee
And would have no reward save thou.
Who was it rescued thee, and how
Did men call him?" "Tristan he hight,
King Mark's nephew and noble knight."

Tristan was watching, and he knew
The time was nearing for his due,
Which was her love: no more he asked,
Though often he was over-tasked
Because of it. His heart waxed glad.
"Am I not like to him who had
The rescuing of thee alone
Without the help of anyone,
And cut the hand of Gamaren?"
"Merely because ye two are men
Art thou like him: I know thee not."
"Dame, hast thou then so soon forgot
Him who was harper for thee ere
Within thy chamber? I was there:
I am the harper thou hast had,
And both of us alike were sad;
My shoulder gave me mickle dole,
But thou didst heal and make me whole
By taking forth the venom's sting
That caused me so much suffering.
Thou knowest, when I went to bathe
Thou drewest forth my tempered blade
And there was left a nick in it
To which that splinter fairly fit,
That Perenis brought forth to thee

Enwrapped in silk cloths carefully.
When thou didst see how they agreed,
Thy love for me was small indeed;
Angered and wroth, thou didst up-take
That sword, and didst approach to slake
Desire for vengeance on me: I
Appeased thee shortly, telling why
It chanced that I was lying there:
I told thee of the golden hair
That was the cause of so much woe.
Thy mother did not fail to know
The secret too: she yielded thee
To fare upon the ship with me.
Fair was that vessel. We had sailed
But three days out when our wind failed,
And at the oars we had to row,
And with my hands I labored so
That I was sore athirst, and thou
Wert likewise from the heat, I trow.
This same Brangain, at thy behest
Took out a goblet from the chest,
But she mistook against her will
The beverage that was to fill
That cup of ours: the magic draught
Was clear as wine, and so I quaffed
Of it when it was offered me.
Thereafter I might no more see
What better fortune was or worse
When I had drunk; but to rehearse
This tale for thee I do not need.
Fatal that hour was, indeed!"

"Surely some master taught this tale
Thou tellest me: to no avail
Thou wouldst be Tristan, whom, I pray,
God will give blessings to. But say,
Hast thou more news to give to me?"

"Yea, there is more to tell to thee
About a certain leap of mine
Down from the chapel. At the time
When thou wert doomed to burn, and then
Wert yielded to the leper-men,
Among them quarreling was rife,
And much debate, and mickle strife,
And one was judged to tell who should
Hold thee at will within the wood.
I lay in ambush then; with me
Was none but Governal, but he
Struck at them all most valiantly,
And I sent many crashing too
With heavy blows; methinks it's due
To know me now by what I've said.
Into the forest we two fled
And wept the dolor we were in.
The hermit who is called Ugrin
Is living yet: God grant him peace!"

"There is no need to name him; cease.
Thou art not like what thou dost claim:
Thou art a rascal, lacking shame,
And he is knight of courtesy,
With little likeness unto thee.
This is a strange thing thou hast told
In trickery: thou art so bold
That I shall cause my folk to hale
Thee to the King, to hear the tale
Of thy misdeeds." "Nay, for if he
Knew this, the weight would fall on thee
The sooner for it. People say
That true-love service must one day
Find its reward, but I perceive
Those words speak falsely and deceive,
Else my love would be mine, but she
Is aye lost to me now, I see."

"Sir, who hath caused thee this distress?"
"She who once loved me, and no less
Will love me still, if God agree.
She must not leave me, sikerly.
I'll tell thee more: there can be found
A wondrous nature in a hound
That loves its lord: where is Husdain?
When I was gone he did remain
Foodless and drinkless; mad was he
Because they held him back from me
For three whole days: they struck that beast,
But vainly, and he was released
And fled away to find me out."
"True is that tale, and without doubt
He bides in my possession still,
Pledge of our joy that's yet to fill."
"For me he'd leave Isold the fair.
Let him be put before me there
To try his knowledge of his lord."
"His knowledge! Thou canst not afford
To test him so; he will not spare
Even thy misery, for there
Is no man who approaches him
That he would not devour with grim,
Fell teeth, for he's bereft
Of master since Sir Tristan left.
Within the chamber yonder he
Croucheth and growleth sullenly.—
Damsel, bring him out to me!"

Brangain went in, and she made free
The thongs that held him, but the hound
Broke loose from her in one swift bound:
For he had heard the sound of speech,
And now he straineth hard to reach
Sir Tristan; with great haste he sped,
And leaped on him, and raised his head.

No beast had ever such joy made:
He smote with snout and feet; he bayed
And licked his hands so joyously
That it was piteous to see.
Isolde saw and was dismayed,
For she was very sore afraid
That he was skilled in wizardry,
For he was masked in poverty.
He spoke to his leal hound and said:
"Blessed be the food that I have fed
To thee, Husdain, for thou hast not
Shifted thy love, nor hast forgot
Thy master, but hast showed me here
A better welcoming and cheer
Than she whom I loved faithfully.
She thinks I feign, but let her see
The token that she gave to me
When we last parted, as a sign:
This golden ring, once hers, now mine,
She gave to me with many a tear.
And I have always kept it near
As friend and councillor, and I
Was very like, methought, to die
Because it spoke not, though I called.
For love I kissed that emerald
And wept my tears upon the ring."

Isold knew well that little thing;
She saw the brachet nearly mad
With excess of the joy he had
For Tristan's sake, and she was ware
That Tristan stood before her there.
"Alas," she said, "how blind am I!
My heart should rather learn to die
Since I have wrongly failed to know
Him who hath been tormented so
Because of me: right heartily

I do repent it,—pity me!"
She swooned; he caught her as she fell.
Brangain beheld, and she knew well
What there was need to do; and when
She was brought back to life again
He held her close upon his breast
And on her face and eyes he pressed
Kisses a thousand fold and more.
"Ah, Tristan! What great travail sore
Thou hadst for me! May I be thought
Unworthy princess and untaught,
If I do not reward thee now.
How shall it be, Brangain? Speak thou!"
"Cease, then, my lady, from this jest,
And see that he is fitly dressed,
For he is Tristan, thou Isold.
I see it hath been truly told:
Those with least reason cry the worst."
"What ease shall we provide him first?"
"The time is meet; thou shouldst take pain
To give the service he is fain
To have of thee, Isold, before
King Mark comes from the river's shore!"
"May it be swollen so that he
Tarries there eight days helplessly!"

And now, as ye have truly heard,
Sir Tristan, without further word,
Entered in that curtained place
And held the Queen in his embrace.

AN ICELANDIC BALLAD OF TRISTRAN

Tristran went to wage his fight
  Against a heathen foe;
When they had met their wounds were sore
  And both their blood did flow.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

The wounded youth was lifted high
  And carried on his shield,
And many leaches tried their skill
  That he might be healed.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

No healing might be wrought in him;
  An oath he sware:
"None may do leachcraft on me but
  Isodd the fair!"
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Tristran sent her messengers
  And billets three;
"Tell bright Isodd that I am sore,
  And wounded grievously."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Tristran sent her messengers
  And billets five;
"Let her come in haste if she
  Would find me alive."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

"And so let her journey be devised
As I now say:
The ship's sail shall be blue if she
Is on her way."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

The messengers came and stood before
The lady bright:
"He wishes thou wouldst come to him,
Tristran the knight."—
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Queen Isodd paced into the hall
Before her King and spouse:
"Wilt thou let Tristran go unhealed,
Kinsman of thy house?"
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

The King made answer, and his words
Came angrily;
"The man requires no healing now, for
Doomed is he."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

The bright Isodd now turned her speech
To gentleness;
She laid her arms about his neck
In a caress.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

"Thou mightest heal my nephew's wound
With my good will,
If I could know that thou wouldst be
Whole for me still."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

"God will dispose of my return
By His own will;
I shall keep faith," she said, "and come back
Whole for thee still."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

A sable-skin mantle she wrapped her in,
That lady fair,
She walked on the wooden bridge without
And charged them there:
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

"So let my journey be devised
As I shall say,
Let blue be the sail of the ship while I
Am on my way."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Let the sail be hoisted up on the mast
As she decreed,
For she is going to young Tristran
In his great need!
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Eight were the days and eight the nights
The ship sailed through,
And ever behind them favoringly
A strong breeze blew.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Into the chamber Black Isodd passed
These words to say:
"Black sails hath the ship that hither comes
Upon its way."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Again Black Isodd lifted her voice
These words to say:

"Black sails hath the ship that hither comes
Upon its way."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Again Black Isodd lifted her voice
These words to say:
"Black are the sails, they are not blue,
That come this way."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

He hath turned him about and wrestled with death
Right bitterly,
And three miles' distance men heard the sound
When his heart broke free.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

They anchored their ship and came ashore
On the long dark sand;
They carried the bright Isodd the first
Upon the land.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

She passed up, treading upon her way
A long wide street,
And ever the tolling of the bells
Caused her to greet.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

She passed up, treading upon a way
That was strait and long,
And ever she heard the tolling bells
And chanted song.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Isodd the Fair spoke; her color was
As white as stone:
"Tristran, thou shouldst have tarried thy death
Till I came home."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Isodd had gone where his body lay
With a hundred men;
The priests were singing the burial song
In the minster then.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Isodd looked down on his body, and she
Like the rose was red;
The minster priests held candles there
About the dead.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Isodd looked down on his body there
A second time,
And five were the priests that stood about
In numbered rime.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

Few are the folk that endure more woe
In their life-day;
Isodd looked on him, and as one dead
Beside him she lay.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

The woe and anger of Black Isodd
Were but increased,
For bodies two were borne from the church:
Their life had ceased.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

The Black Isodd spoke a bitter word,
And swore an oath:
"If I may help, not even your death
May give joy to you both."
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

In graves of earth they were buried then
  Both deep and wide,
They lay by the church with one of them
  On either side.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

But from each lover there grew apace
  A tall fair tree,
And over the minster roof they met
  Right lovingly.
But fate had shaped it that they should part.

THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY GRAIL

INTRODUCTION TO THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY GRAIL

The mysterious vessel called the Grail makes its first literary appearance in the chivalrous romance, *Le Conte del Graal,* which Chrétien de Troyes left unfinished; but since Chrétien never reached the part of the story in which his hero was to achieve his quest, we never learn of the origin and nature of the vessel from the author. And his continuators are presumably not of much help in determining Chrétien's original intent. The references of Wolfram von Eschenbach (author of a German romance on the same subject early in the thirteenth century) are also puzzling, for his Grail is apparently not a vessel at all, but a stone; and so, what with these ambiguous descriptions by early romancers, the atmosphere of magic and wonder with which the whole episode at the Grail Castle is surrounded, and the striking parallels which it affords to various primitive cults and rituals, the way is open for scholars who wish to see in the chivalrous Grail-story a survival of Celtic folk-lore or myth, or of a fertility cult in which the Lance and Grail have a sexual significance. *The History of the Holy Grail* (otherwise called the *Joseph of Arimathea*) of Robert de Boron has, on the other hand, an undoubted Christian origin and significance: the relation of Robert's Grail to Chrétien's is another question. What we have here is an account, based on early Christian sources, of the so-called "Early History" of the Grail, which accounts for the preservation of the Grail after the Last Supper, and which would no doubt have ended by explaining how it reached Britain before the time of King Arthur, if Robert had held closely to his original scheme. The narrative is, though simple enough in action, prolix and repetitious in presentation: the latter part, which is given here, contains some of the most important passages describing the foundation of the fellowship of the Grail under Joseph, and ends just before Robert's transition to the material of the Merlin cycle. The whole tale is pervaded with the

keen contemporary interest in the sacrament of the Last Supper and the doctrine of transubstantiation, which became a doctrine of the Church at the time when the poem was being written.

What Robert de Boron left incomplete was filled in after a fashion by the author of the long, digressive, wordy prose tale of the *Greater Holy Grail.* This story, which begins by retelling Robert's, does at least describe the arrival of Joseph's followers in Britain, and prepares the way for Arthurian connections; but the story is enormously long, full of marvels and visions and wanderings and allegorizings and lengthy conversions, daunting to any but a medieval reader. A few episodes stand out in relief, however, and one of these is the charming account of the conversion of Evalac's Queen when she was a little girl. It is doubly refreshing in the romance in which it occurs, and it offers an interesting and unusual medieval attempt to present a child's point of view as differing from an adult's.

This selection is taken from Volume II of E. Huchier's edition of *Le Saint Graal,* Le Mans, 1874; the text used for Robert's *Roman du Saint Graal* is F. Michel's edition, Bordeaux, 1841.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY GRAIL

(The first part of the *History of the Holy Grail* tells of the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ; how Joseph of Arimathea asked for his body from Pontius Pilate; how, after the resurrection, Joseph was cast in prison because the body had disappeared; how Vespasian, son of the Roman Emperor Titus [!] was smitten with leprosy and cured by Veronica's veil; how in gratitude for his recovery through this relic he came to Jerusalem to avenge Christ's death, and found Joseph alive in the prison where he had been left and forgotten many years before. During this time Christ had appeared to Joseph and given him the Grail, the vessel of the Last Supper, which had miraculously sustained him without food and drink. He now departs with his sister and his brother-in-law, Bron, and a band of followers.)

Thus did Vespasian avenge the death of Jesus, whom he greatly loved. When Joseph had done he asked leave of Vespasian to depart, and he went with his folk into distant lands, where they dwelt a long time. While they abode there Joseph gave them good instruction, as he was well enabled to: he bade them work, and they did so without demur; thus they fared well for a long time and they lacked nought. But afterwards things fared ill, and I shall tell you in what wise: whatever they wrought or labored at by day or night turned to evil hap, nor would they longer yield themselves to suffer it. This evil came because of one sole sin that began to be amidst them, wherewith they were greatly soiled: it was the sin of lechery, most vile and unclean. When they saw that they might not suffer or endure this evil, they came straightway to Hebron, who

was very close to Joseph, and told him that good fortune was fleeing from them and all ills were pursuing them:

"Nor did ever folk as great as we have so much evil hap; we suffer too great mis-ease, more than others have: wherefore we wish thee for the love of God to tell Joseph of it, since all of us are dying of hunger, and well-nigh mad. We suffer too great want, we and our wives and children." And when Hebron heard this he had great pity thereof and asked them if they had endured this a long time. "Yea, certainly, so long as we might. For the love of God we pray thee, go thou and make inquiry of Joseph why it hath come upon us that we have lost everything, and if it be by our sins or his that our goods are gone." Hebron told them that he would gladly go and ask it of him. Thus he went to Joseph and recounted to him the great shame and mis-ease that the folk about him were suffering, and the mischief that they had; and how they begged to be let know the truth of it. Then Joseph began to pray the Son of God with loyal heart to let him know the course of this affair. And Joseph began to fear that he might have mis-done aught in the sight of God, whereat God might be angered at him, and he was very sorrowful. Then he said,

"Hebron, I shall have knowledge of this; and if I know it I shall tell thee too."

Joseph went to his Vessel and knelt before it weeping, and he said,

"O Lord Who didst put on flesh in the Virgin and wert born of her, Thou didst come of Thy pity and tenderness and didst desire to consort with us because of Thy love for us and to save Thy creatures, who wished to obey thee and follow Thy will. Sire, I saw Thee dead as truly as I saw Thee living, and after death I beheld Thee alive and speaking to me in the tower where I was immured: then Thou didst me great kindness; and there, Lord, Thou didst command me, when Thou didst bring me this Vessel, that any time I willed to have secrets of Thee, I should come before this precious Vessel wherein is Thy glorious blood. There-

fore I do pray and ask of Thee to give me counsel in this matter that my people ask of me (they are in need of bread and meat): that they may work Thy pleasure and accomplish Thy will." Then the Voice that came of the Holy Spirit spoke to Joseph:

"Joseph, be not dismayed; thou hast no blame in this folly."

"Then, Sire, of Thy pity suffer that I remove from my company those that have sinned."

"That, Joseph, thou shalt not do; but I command thee one thing of great significance: thou shalt take the Vessel of My blood and openly make test of it regarding these sinners, with the Vessel quite unveiled. Remember that I was sold and betrayed, smitten and outraged: I knew it should be so but never did I wish to speak thereof before I was in the house of Simon with my friends, and I told them that he who was to betray Me was eating with Me. He who knew he had done this thing was ashamed and withdrew, nor was he ever My disciple thereafter, but there was another in his place. None shall take his place until thou art seated there. Thou knowest well that I was seated at Simon's table, where I ate and drank: there I foresaw clearly the torment that was to come upon Me. In the name of that table I cause now another to be decked, and thou shalt have it. Thou shalt summon Bron thy brother-in-law, who is a good man, and naught shall come of him but good. Cause him therefore to go down to the water to seek and catch a fish, and the first he takes he shall bring to thee. Knowest thou what thou shalt do with it? Thou shalt place it on that table, and the Vessel also, where it most pleases thee, if it be but in the center, and thou shalt cover it over with a napkin. When thou hast done this without fail, take thou again the fish that Hebron hath caught thee and place it down in the part opposite to the Vessel. And when thou hast done all this, call together all thy people and tell them they shall see wherefore they have been so afflicted, and who hath deserved, for his sins, that

they had such a mis-chance. And when thou hast taken th seat in that part where I did sit at the Last Supper, wha time I ate with My disciples, seat thou Bron at thy righ hand: then thou wilt see that Bron will hold him from tha place. That empty place signifies the seat of Judas wh left our company in his folly when he perceived that he ha betrayed me. That place may not be filled until Enygeu shall have a child of Bron her husband, whom thou and th sister do so love: and when the child is born, his plac shall be assigned there.—When thou hast done all this tho shalt call thy people and tell them, if they believe in Go the Father of all the world, and in the Son and Holy Ghos (which is the blessed Trinity, holy and one), and in al the commandments and teachings I gave unto them whe I spoke to them through thee of the three virtues that ar one; if they have guarded all this well, nor transgresse upon it, let them come and be seated; thou shalt will it b the grace of Our Lord, Who does good and honor to Hi people."

Joseph fulfilled the commandment of our Lord, and sum moned them even as God had instructed him. One part o the people seated themselves, but the others did not. The table was full, save for the place that might not be filled and those who sat perceived a sweetness which was the completion of the desire of their hearts; and they who felt this grace forgot speedily enow the others, who had it not. One of those who were seated—his name was Peter—looked behind him and beheld those where standing; he prayed right humbly,

"Tell me truly, of your love, can ye feel or perceive aught of the good that we feel?" They answered,

"Not a whit." Then said Peter to them,

"Then let no man doubt that ye are assoiled of that foul sin which ye have caused Joseph to ask of, for which ye have lost grace." Thereafter they issued from the house for very shame, and there was not one of them that wept not and made sorry cheer. When the service was done each

man arose. They went among the others; but Joseph commanded them to return daily for this grace, without delay. Thus Joseph knew and discovered the sinners by the showing of almighty God, and thus was the Vessel first cherished and proved.

Long time they had this grace; and the others, who were deprived of it, questioned often those who were included, saying,

"What is the nature of this grace, and what do ye feel therewith? Who is it that hath given you this gift and informed you with it?" They answered,

"No heart of man might suffice to imagine the great delight we have of it, nor the joy in which we abide and sojourn until the morning. Of whom might come this abundant grace that filleth the heart of man and woman and restores the soul entire?" To them Joseph made answer,

"This good cometh of Jesus the Blessed, who saved Joseph in the prison where he was put without cause."

"This Vessel that we have seen hath never been revealed to us; what it is we know not, howsoever we may surmise." They said,

"It is by this Vessel we are parted from you, for it belongeth to no sinner; to no fellowship or love."

"Ye can see it clearly: but tell us what desire or pleasure have ye when one sayeth to you 'Be seated now'; and can ye tell who it was that did that sin for which ye were cast forth from grace?" They said,

"We go hence like caitiffs and leave you; but if it please you, tell us (for we know that ye know) what we shall say when we are asked wherefore we have left you."

"Hearken what ye shall reply when ye are challenged, and it will be a true response; that we have remained in the grace of God our Father, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, strengthened by Joseph's belief and his providing for us."

"And how shall that Vessel be spoken of, in which ye take

such delight? Tell us how it is named when one speaks of it?" Peter replied,

"I seek not to conceal it; it shall rightly be called the Grail, for much gree doth he have of it that sees it: to all it is agreeable and fair, and those who may endure it take delight in seeing it and partaking of its fellowship: they have as much joy as a fish of the sea that, having been held in a man's hand, is allowed to escape and swim away in the water." When they heard this they were well-pleased, nor would they grant it any other name than Grail, and well might they be agreed thereon. Thus all of those who departed thence, and eke all who remained, called the Vessel Grail for the reason I have said.

The folk that remained designated the third hour as the time when they went to the Grail, and that they called its service; and since this thing is true we call it the History of the Grail, and it will have the name of Grail from that time henceforward.

The false folk who departed left behind one of their number who was called Moses and who seemed wise to the people, ingenious in observation and artful in words. He made good commencement and ending, and of his knowledge made semblant that he was wise and piteous. He said that he would not quit this folk that God so filled with the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then he wept and made great moan, and sad and piteous cheer, very marvellous to see; and if anyone passed before him, he prayed him of his grace to intercede that Joseph might have mercy on him. This he begged fast and often, as it appeared with simple heart.

"For the sake of God, pray Joseph to grant me the grace of reconciliation." Many times he begged this, until it chanced one day that they were gathered together, and pity for Moses seized them; they said that they would speak of it to Joseph, and pray it of him. When they saw Joseph, they fell before his feet, all of them, and each man begged and pressed him to have pity on Moses. Joseph was greatly amazed at what they asked, and he said to them,

"What would ye? Tell me what ye pray of me." And they answered with all speed,

"The greater part of our people are departed from us, and only one hath remained, who weeps right tenderly, and cries and makes great dole, saying that he will never leave this place so long as he lives. He prays us to pray thee by the grace we have in thy fellowship with great joy and lordship that he may be partaker in it, for we too desire it." Joseph replied without retreat,

"It is not for me to give it, for God our Lord gives that to whomsoever He wills. Those to whom He giveth it of a truth are those who of a right should have it: and this man, methinks, is not such from his bearing, God knows. We must know this, as I think, that he may not deceive us. If he be not good he will deceive himself, and he shall pay for it first."

[*MS Lacuna*]

"Thou didst desire to suffer earthly torment and endure death for us on earth. As truly as Thou didst save me and deliver me from the prison where Vespasian found me when he descended into the dungeon; and as Thou didst grant me, what time Thou gavest me the Vessel, that Thou wouldst come to me without delay when I required Thee in my need; even as truly as I believe in Thee, reveal to me what hath befallen Moses and whether he is utterly lost, that I may know it certainly and tell it to my folk, whom Thou hast given me as fellows, of Thy great courtesy." The Voice came to Joseph and replied to him,

"Joseph, the significance is now come to thee of what I said when thou didst found the table, that this place should be held in remembrance of the place of Judas, that he lost in his ignorance. I said that he would betray Me and that that place would not be filled before the day of Judgment, which all folk still await: and thou thyself mayest fill it when thou shalt bear hence the memory of thy death; but I tell thee for thy comfort that *this* place shall not be filled

until the third man comes descended of thy lineage and issued of thy kin: Hebron will beget and thy sister Enygeus bear, and the son of his son shall fill this place. Thou askest what hath befallen Moses who is lost: hearken and I shall tell thee.

"When his companions departed and left him here with thee, and he would not go with the others, but remained alone, he did that to deceive thee, and now he hath received his reward. He might not know nor believe that thy folk could have so much grace, and he remained merely to bring shame on the company. Know that he is cast down into the abyss and lost utterly: no one will speak more of him in fable or in song until he comes who is to fill the empty place: but there is no need to speak more of him. Those who constitute My fellowship and thine shall cry out upon Moses and accuse him greatly. Thus shalt thou tell and recount to thy disciples. Think now what thou hast achieved: with Me thou shalt find it even so."

Thus the Holy Ghost spoke to Joseph and revealed the evil work of Moses, telling him how it was; and Joseph did not conceal it from Bron or his fellows, but he told them openly what he had heard of Jesus Christ and how the matter stood, and what had been done with Moses. And all of them said,

"Great is the might of God: a fool is he who chases folly for this dolorous life."

Long time did Bron and his wife abide together, until they had twelve sons, fair and gentle and well grown. They had the burden of them (as it well befit them) until Enygeus spoke to Bron her lord and said,

"Sir, thou shouldst ask of Joseph my brother what we shall do with our children: they are now tall and well grown, and we ought do nothing with them unless we speak with him." Bron said,

"I too had thought to speak with thee of this: gladly will I go to him and ask it of him."

Bron went to Joseph and told him how it stood and what

he willed, and that his sister had sent him thither in the matter.

"Sir, we have twelve great sons; we wish not to dispose of them nor do ought with them save through thee: tell me therefore what to do."

"Let them be in the fellowship of God; there they shall not suffer lack. I shall pray for it gladly when I find the time and place." Thereafter they let all that be until a day when Joseph was come to worship before the Vessel, and he remembered with gladness what Bron had asked of him, whereat he wept right tenderly and prayed to God:

"Our Father, almighty King, if it please Thee, let me know Thy will in this thing, what shall be done with my nephews and what labor shall be given them. Reveal and show me this thing, if it please Thee." And God sent to Joseph an angel who said unto him,

"God sendeth me to thee: knowest thou what He commandeth thee through me? So much will He do for thy nephews as thou dost pray and ask: He wisheth that they be brought and turned to the service of God, being His disciples with a master over them. If they wish to have wives they shall have them: and he who hath none, let him know the wedded men shall serve him: but do thou command their father and mother to bring before thee him who desireth no wife. Cause them to obey thee, and when they have come to thee, be not afeared, but before thou goest there thou shalt hear the voice of the Holy Ghost."

Joseph learned well what the angel said to him, and when the angel departed, Joseph abode in great joy for the good tidings, knowing that he would have all those youths. He went to Bron and told him the counsel he had received:

"Knowest thou," said he, "what I ask of thee? Teach thy children to observe and uphold the law of God: they may have wives in the manner of other folk, by espousal; but if there is one of them that desireth not to be wedded, but rather remain in my house, let him abide with me." Bron said,

"It shall be at thy commandment and pleasure." Bron went to his wife and told her what Joseph had said. When Enygeus had heard it she was delighted in heart and said to Bron,

"Haste thee then, my lord, and do as thou art bound to do." Bron called his children and asked them what was the life each chose to lead. They said,

"We wish to accord with thy will and commandment." And thereat all were rejoiced, but Bron urged them until they had spouses and were wedded; and he commanded them to bear them loyally and fairly in the company of their dames: they were to be lords and their wives ladies. They took them according to the ancient law, without pride or arrogance, in the manner of Holy Church, and Joseph instructed them what they should take and what leave, and how maintain themselves. Thus the matter was concluded. Each one hath taken his spouse save only one, who had rather be cut and flayed than take a wife; there might be none for him, he said. When Bron heard this he marvelled greatly, and took him apart for privy rede. He said,

"My son, why wilt thou take no wife, as thou shouldst, and as thy brothers have done?"

"Speak not thus to me, for so long as I live I shall never have espousal nor take a wife." Eleven of the sons were married, and Bron took the twelfth to his uncle Joseph, and told it him. When Joseph heard this he smiled and said,

"This one belongeth to me, for he shall be truly mine. If thou and my sister are agreed betwixt the two of you, ye shall give him to me." They answered,

"Gladly, lord: he shall be thine without regret or wrath." Joseph took him in his arms and embraced him, and he told the father and his sister that they might depart and leave the youth with him. Bron departed with his wife, and the young man abode with Joseph. Then said Joseph,

"Fair nephew, of a truth thou shouldst be greatly rejoiced, for our Lord of His pleasure hath chosen thee out to serve Him and exalt His sweet name, that may not be suffi-

iently praised. Fair sweet nephew, thou shalt be captain nd governor over thy brethren. Stir not from beside me; emember what I shall tell thee. If our chosen Saviour Jesus Christ but wills it, of His power He shall appear to me, I well believe." Joseph went unto his Vessel, and right humbly he prayed God to reveal how he should do well for his nephew. Joseph ended his prayer and anon he heard the Voice replying to him.

"Thy nephew is sage and simple and well instructed, retentive and well-attempered: he will believe thee in all things, and will hold all thou shalt say to him. Hearken how thou shalt instruct him: tell him of My love for thee and for all folk who are well endoctrined; tell him how I was bought, sold, and delivered, and eke struck and reviled, being betrayed by one of My disciples, and spat upon and bound to the post, and how they did Me all the ill they might, for on the next day they hanged Me; and tell him thou didst take Me from the cross and wash My wounds, and didst receive My blood in this Vessel; and how thou wert taken by the Jews and put in the dungeon's depth, and how I comforted thee when I found thee there: for there I gave a gift to thee and all thy line, to all who may know and understand it. Tell him of the life and the love I gave to all thy company, and recall that I gave thee dominion over the heart of man in thy fellowship. Conceal nought of this from thy nephew; and all folk who know it and recount it perfectly shall have grace and pleasance, those who do dwell upon the earth. I shall guard their heritage for them and help them; they may not be wrongfully judged nor maimed for the sake of that whereof they do sacrament in remembrance of Me.—When thou hast revealed him all of this, bear My Vessel to him and tell him what is within: some part of the blood that flowed from Me. If he believes this truly he shall have confirmation of his faith. Tell him how the Enemy ensnares and deceives My friends and those who follow Me; let him beware, I pray him. Forget not to tell him that he shall guard himself from anger, and be not

quarrelsome; ill guided is he who sees not clear. Let him keep the matter close, for this will free him most speedily from ill thought or wrath or dole. He shall have need of these things, and they will protect him from the Enemy, who will then have no part in him. Let him beware of the delight of the flesh, and let him not be a dawdler, for all too quickly might the flesh entrap him and put him to sorrow and sin.—When thou hast told him all this, pray of him to retell it to his fellows, without fail,—to all that he shall know to be good men. He shall then speak of Me wherever he may be, far and near, for the more good he speaketh thereof, the more good he will find therein. Tell him that he shall have a son as heir, who shall guard the Vessel, wherefore thou shouldst make revelation to him of us and our fellowship. Forget not after all of this that he shall have the guard of his brothers and sisters. He shall depart towards the west, to the most distant places he can find; and wherever he cometh he shall exalt my name throughout the entire country, and pray to his Father to have His grace, and he shall have it. To-morrow, when ye are gathered, ye shall see a great light descend in your midst, bearing a letter. This letter shall be given over to Peter to read, and thou shalt command him to depart to whatever place he wills, whither his heart most draweth him; and let him not be dismayed, for he shall not be forgotten of Me. When thou hast commanded this, ask him whither he desireth most to go: he will tell thee without doubt that he will go to the vale of Avaron and dwell in that country. That land is stretched out towards the west. There he will tarry and await the son of Alan; nor may he depart or leave this earth until he hath one who will read that letter for him, and tell him what this Vessel is, and what became of Moses, who was lost. When he has heard and seen and known these things he will die and come into joy without fail. And when thou hast said all this, send for thy nephews, and tell them all the words that I have spoken, and all this instruction, passing over nought."

Alan was converted and fulfilled of the grace of God. Joseph had heard and well remembered what the Voice had said: he called his nephew Alan and told him point by point all that he knew of Jesus Christ, and what the Voice had told him thereof. Messire Robert de Boron sayeth that if he willed to name all that might be put in this book, it would be doubled more than a hundred times. But he who may have this small part can surely know (if he will hearken well he may learn enough of good) the things that Joseph revealed and taught unto his nephew. And when he had instructed him in all this, he said to him,

"Fair nephew, thou shouldst be a good man, for thou hast gained much grace of God." Then Joseph led him apart, and told his father and his mother that he would watch over and govern his brothers and sisters, and they yielded them to be governed by him. If they had doubt of anything they were to seek counsel of him; if they did this it would be well, but if they did not, evil would befall them. He commanded Bron his father and he urged his wife, for he wished them to give him the seigneury over their sons and daughters, great and small alike: the more might they fear and trust and love him, and he would govern them well until each one trusted in him.

The next day when they were at the service, as the history telleth us, a great light appeared to them bearing a letter, and all of them arose at once. Joseph took it, and calling Peter he said to him,

"Fair brother Peter, He Who redeemed us all from Hell, hath chosen thee as messenger, and thou shalt carry this letter into whatever place thou wilt." When Peter heard Joseph speak he said he might not believe that God had made him a messenger, nor did it befit him to carry the letter. He however said,

"He knoweth thee better than thyself: but one thing we pray thee of thy love for us, that thou tell us into what parts thou wilt go." Peter said,

"I know it well though none hath told me: no messenger

thou hast seen knows better without announcement. I shall go into that western land that is very savage, into the vale of Avaron, to await God's mercy; and do thou too have mercy on me, and pray God that I go not contrary to His will by any strength, boldness, nor deceit, nor say aught contrary to His will. Pray thou also that the Enemy may not tempt nor destroy me, nor cut me off from the love of God." And all of them replied as one,

"May God, Who hath the power, save thee!"

They departed into the house of Bron, and called his children, and to all of them Bron said,

"My sons and daughters, never may ye have Paradise save by obedience; therefore I desire that all of you obey one man alone; and whatsoever I may give of grace and good for my son Alan I deliver over to him, and it shall not be in vain. I bid him and pray him to guard him well, and eke that ye obey him as ye should your lord. If ye have need of counsel, go to him without delay, and he will give it you in all loyalty. One thing I dare well advise you: undertake no thing contrary to his commandment; do his will devotedly."

So the youths departed from their father and it was their good will to trust in Alan their brother. He went into a distant land and took with him his brothers; in all places where he came he announced the death of Jesus Christ and preached His name even as Joseph taught him, and he found much grace among all men. So they departed; but now I shall leave telling of them and return. Peter now spoke to Joseph and the rest and said,

"Now it behooveth me to go, methinks."

"According to God's commandment be it!"

Thereafter they held a gathering and begged Peter not to go; he replied anon that he had no desire to tarry, for he must needs go. "But I shall stay for you this day and then depart to-morrow, after we have been at service." Thus it stood as they devised.

Our Lord, who knew how the affair should proceed, sent

an angel unto Joseph who comforted him greatly and told him not to be dismayed, for he was not forgot. "It behooveth thee to do My will, to record the love of thee and Me. Peter must depart from you: knowest thou wherefore? Thou didst venture to retain him this day, and he to remain: this God wished to reveal that he might speak truth, telling no falsehood when he seeth thy Vessel and the rare good things that I have told thee. Joseph, it befits those things that have a good commencement to end thereafter. Our Lord knows that Bron hath been a good man, and therefore of His will He had him fish in the water and catch that fish that is in thy service. God wishes and decrees that he shall have thy Vessel and guard it after thee. Teach him how he shall hold and maintain it, and of the love thou hast for Me, and I have ever had for thee; teach him the disposition and all the nature of God, all that thou hast heard of Him since thou wert born. Put him in belief of Me, and teach him well. Tell him how God came to thee in the prison holding thy Vessel, and how he delivered it unto thy hands: he spoke to thee holy words that are sweet and precious, gracious and full of pity, and rightly are they called Secrets of the Grail. When thou hast done this fair and well, commend the Vessel to him to guard thereafter, and let him not in any wise misuse it, for all the fault will be on him, and dearly will he pay for it. And those who wish to call him rightly shall hereafter name him the Rich Fisher. Ever shall he wax in honor for the sake of the fish he caught at the commencement of that grace; and it is fitting that thou make him lord and master thereof. Even as the mount progresses and ever grows the smaller, so this folk must go into the west. So soon as ever he is seized of thy Vessel and holds it, he must needs depart straightway for the west into whatever place he wills to go; and when he pauses wheresoever he wishes to abide, he shall await the son of his son in all security; and when that son arrives, the Vessel shall be given over to him, and do thou tell him and command him to charge him with its

keeping thereafter. Then shall be accomplished and revealed the significance of the blessed Trinity which we have devised in three parts, and of that third part, I tell thee truly, Jesus Christ, Who is Lord of all things, shall do His will, without any let. When thou givest over the Vessel and all things to Bron and art dis-seized thereof, all these things being accomplished, then Peter shall depart (I would not have him tarry), for he may say truly that he will have seen Hebron the Rich Fisher possessed of the Vessel and the honor. For this reason Peter abode until the morrow, and then departed. When thou hast done this he will leave and pass over land and sea; and He Who watches over all things will guard him well; and when thou hast done this thou shalt depart from this world and enter into perfect joy which is My lot and the portion of all good men in life everlasting. Thou and the heirs of thy race, all that are born of thy sister, shall be saved; and they who learn to say this shall be most loved and cherished, most honored and feared of good folk and the people."

And Joseph did all that the Voice commanded him. The next day all of them assembled and tarried for the service, and Joseph told again all that the Voice had said, saving only the word that Christ spoke to him in the dungeon. This word he taught to the Rich Fisher, and when he had said these things he also gave them to him written down. He revealed these secrets to him privily. When they had all listened and hearkened well to Joseph telling them that he would depart from their company and be with them no longer, they were greatly dismayed. And when they saw Joseph dis-seized of his office they had great pity, for they knew that he had delivered over his grace and his commandment, but they knew not how.

The Rich Fisher was now possessed of the Grail and all commandments. Joseph took leave when they arose, and greatly did they weep. They sighed and lamented right humbly, and many prayers they made, which God holds dear. Joseph remained three days in the company of the

Rich Fisher to do him honor, nor did he refuse. On the third day he said to Joseph,

"Hearken to me, Joseph, for a space: truly I tell thee that I desire to depart; if it please thee, I would go by thy will."

"It pleases me well," answered Joseph, "for these things come of God. I know what thou wilt bear away, and in what land thou wilt go. Depart thou: I remain, and I shall be at God's commandment."

So Joseph tarried. The Good Fisher departed—he it is of whom many wise words are told—into the land where he was born, and Joseph remained. Messire Robert de Boron says, if we would know it, that it is meet to tell where Alan went, the son of Hebron: into what land he fared, what befell him, what son he had, and who mothered it; what also befell Peter and where he went and in what place he will be recovered, albeit he may scarce be found; and also what befell Moses who was so long lost, for he must be found, so it is said, where the Rich Fisher fared and tarried: and he may have cunning to lead back him who had to depart.

These four things must all be assembled and recounted, each one alone as it was; but well I believe that no man might do it unless he had heard tell before the greater story of the Grail, which is all true. At this time as I recount it for my Lord Walter of Mont-Belyal, there was never before recounted the Great History of the Grail by any mortal man; but I let it be known by all those who would have this book, that if God gives me health and life, well-being and will to assemble all these parts, it shall be done if I may find them writ in books. And likewise if I leave out one part and fail to recount it, still it is needful to tell the fifth and forget the other four until I may return to my telling with more leisure, and to this work. Each part would be needful of itself; but if I leave them entire, I know of no man so wise who would not think them wholly lost, not knowing what had become of them, nor what division I might have made of them.

FROM THE GREATER HISTORY OF THE HOLY GRAIL

(After the departure of Joseph of Arimathea from the Holy Land, together with his followers and the Grail, he reaches the city of Sarras and devotes considerable time and effort to the conversion of the heathen King Evalac. The Queen is a Christian already; she tells how she had been converted in childhood by the miraculous cure of her mother.)

"My mother was a Duchess of Orberic, a good dame and very honorable; but my father was very fierce and cruel. Now it happened at this time, twenty-seven years ago, that there was a very holy and religious hermit in our country for whom God wrought many fair miracles and good deeds. This man was named Salustes; and my mother at that time had an infirmity proper to women only, which she had suffered nineteen months, so that she had lost her color and the strength of her limbs and much blood. And when she heard the report of the miracles that our Lord wrought by the hand of this holy man, she thought that she would go and speak with him and find out if she might discover counsel there for her infirmity, which was so great that she thought she would sooner die than escape it; and when she came before the good man she fell at his feet and cried him mercy, weeping, and begged him to have pity on the great agony she suffered. He gazed upon her and said,

" 'Woman, what dost thou ask me concerning thy infirmity? Certes if thou art mortal woman and sinner, and I am mortal man and sinner, I have no power to give health to man or woman; but Jesus Christ the true God gives it to whom He pleases.' And she said, weeping,

"'Fair sweet Sire, pray to thy Lord to look upon me with pity, and I know of a truth He will not deny thee.' And the good man said,

"'Woman! One ought not come to the physician with empty hands when one asks healing;' and she said,

"'Sire, I come not empty-handed, for I bear with me a great treasure which I shall leave for thy god, if he cures me.' And he answered,

"'God has nought to do with treasure unless He have the heart also, for no sacrifice pleases Him so well as true repentance.' And she said,

"'Man of God, there is nought in the world I would not do if thou commandest it, if I be cured of this great suffering.' And he answered,

"'If thou wilt believe in Jesus Christ the true God, I might promise that He will give thee healing so soon as thou art departed hence.' And she fell at his feet and kissed him and said,

"'Sire, if He sent me health I would believe in Him all the days of my life.' And the good man said,

"'Indeed, if thou believest truly that He is true God, thou wilt soon be healed; for nought oppresses those who do believe it.'

"'Sire,' she said, 'I believe it, and that He is true God, with power to cast this infirmity from me.' And the good man took a book and read—as he told us afterwards—in the Gospel; and so my mother was cured by Jesus Christ, she who had been ill of this infirmity for twenty-eight years. And when he had read, he spoke,

"'Arise, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost;' and then my mother felt that she was hale as ever she had been, and she had likewise recovered the strength of her body and all her limbs. And when she felt that she was thus healed, she said,

"'Ah Sire, now I see that one ought to believe in none save that God Who cured me of my great suffering, for I have given the doctors more than ten thousand besants

since I have been ill, nor could any of them give me healing. In this one I believe, and shall believe for all the days of my life.'

"Then the good man said that it behooved her to receive baptism, and she asked him what baptism might be. And he told her that it was the salvation of Christians; and then she said that she would gladly receive it. And the good man baptized her in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. And when he had baptized her, my mother came out of the little house to where I was awaiting her. And those who were with her took me by the hand and led me before the hermit; and when I was before him she said to me:

" 'Fair sweet daughter, I am all whole; and I wish that thou wouldst do what I command.' And I answered trembling that I would do her pleasure, for I marveled what she willed of me; and she said, 'Fair daughter, I wish thee to believe in Him Who cured me.' But I was a child and simple, and I thought that she spoke of the good man; and I told my mother that I dared not. And she asked me why, and I said it was because he had too great a beard. And the good man commenced to smile at what I said of him, and he said to me,

" 'Fair daughter, I am not He; it is Another Who is full of all beauty and joy.' And I asked where He was, and if I might see Him; and I said that if He were more beautiful than my brother, I would believe in Him. This brother of mine that I speak of was so fair that no image might be made like to him. And as soon as I had said it, the hermit answered,

" 'Fair daughter, in time thou shalt see Him of Whom I have told thee that He is as fair as thy brother; and whichever of the two thou seest first, the other thou shalt not ever see again.' And as soon as he had said that, I beheld a great light without the chapel, that was very rare and precious; and in it was the figure of a Man so fair and bright that no eyes in the world are keen enough to behold

it perfectly. This Man held in his right hand a thing that the hermit called a cross: it was all red, and its two eyes cast forth rays as red as a burning coal. And when He had come out He paused, and I was so frightened at the great miracle that I could not gaze longer at Him. Then I bent me down to earth as one that hath fainted. When I had been so for a time the hermit took me by the chin and raised me up; and when I looked about I saw nothing but him and my mother; and the good man said,

"'Fair daughter, what thinkest thou of Him?' And I said that as much by God's will as his I would gladly believe; and then he baptized me in the name of the Trinity. After that he taught us the faith: how Christ was conceived and born of the Virgin without loss of her maidenhood, and how He suffered death to redeem the world of enduring pain, and how He rose on the third day and freed His friends from Hell, and how He ascended to Heaven forty days afterwards, and sent His spirit to the disciples at Jerusalem after eleven days, and how He taught them to bless His body when He was eating with them the day before His crucifixion. And when He had taught us all these things He gave the sacrament to my mother and me; and when He put it in my mouth He told me I should believe it was the body that had been harbored in the blessed Virgin: since I doubted of it I delayed my answer, but straightway meseemed that it was the same figure that I had seen issue from the chapel, and so I said that I believed as one who had seen it openly."

HORNED SEYFRIED AND THE NIBELUNG CYCLE

INTRODUCTION TO HORNED SEYFRIED AND THE NIBELUNG CYCLE

The great Nibelung cycle, which is compounded of myths and of historical legends dating back to the time of the great Teutonic migrations, is best known, perhaps, by the poems of the *Elder Edda,* the prose *Volsung Saga,* and the Middle High German epic of *The Fall of the Nibelungs.* In all of these the characters are treated in the heroic epic manner: Siegfried (or Sigurd, as the Icelandic versions call him) the dragon-slayer; Kriemhild (or Gudrun) his wife; Brunhild, the mysterious Amazonian princess, who has prior claims upon him; the Burgundian princes, brothers-in-law of Siegfried—they are all involved in a catastrophic doom growing out of greed and deception, and are conceived and presented in the grand manner of epic narrative. *The Lay of Horned Seyfried,* on the other hand, represents an uncourtly, popular version of the traditional material, even though in details it has been influenced by the courtly epic. It is preserved in early printed books of the sixteenth century; but although we have no manuscripts of it before that time, it is apparent that the story had taken form long before, and probably goes back to the *Spielmannspoesie* of the Middle Ages. Here Siegfried is much more of a märchen hero than a medieval knight: his behavior is boisterous and practical rather than chivalrous. The heroine too is a märchen princess whose chief function is to be rescued from a dragon. The atmosphere of the description of Seyfried's childhood in the forest in the dwarf's smithy is quite typical of popular folk-tales.

Yet there is evidence of direct connection with the more aristocratic legend as well. The curious student will find it interesting to compare this rough-and-ready narrative, which at times borders on the ludicrous, with the stately *Nibelungenlied* on the one hand, and with the play by Hans Sachs (derived from the *Horned Seyfried*) on the other. It is also interesting to analyze the text of the Lay for discrepancies which show the

unsuccessful combination of several conflicting versions. And the lusty vigor of the narrative itself, its uncouth simplicity and naïve practicalness (recall, for instance, the distress of the dragon at the thought of losing the princess after he has fed her for so many years, at such trouble; and the common-sense of Seyfried in throwing into the Rhine the gold that he has won, since he must soon die!) make it refreshing reading for its own sake.

The problems of source and treatment have been discussed by Wolfgang Golther, in his *Das Lied vom Hürnen Seyfried*, Halle, 1889, and by Elizabeth Bernhöft in *Das Lied vom Hörnenen Sigfrid*, Rostock, 1910. The text used for this translation is that contained in *Die Nibelungen*, edited by Paul Piper, Volume I, pp. 143-166.

HORNED SEYFRIED[1]

Verse

Herein ye find a noble lay
Of Horny Seyfried's might;
'Tis Hildebrand's, and I assay
No man has heard its like.
If ye will read it straight and true,
I will be justified of you.

1. There dwelt in Netherlandish parts a king well known to fame,
Great were his strength and power, and Siegmund was his name;
He and his dame together had a son that Seyfried hight,
Here in this lay ye shall be told of that dauntless knight.

2. The lad was stormy-tempered and was so strong and large
That to his sire and mother he was a heavy charge;
To no man would he yield him as subject for a day,
For he desired alone that he might journey far away.

3. Thus spake the King's advisers: "Then let him go indeed,
If he will not remain here, that is the wisest rede;
Let him but strive at something and he will soon be tamed.
He will become a hero both mighty and well famed."

[1] The lines of this poem follow the meter of the original, with a cæsura between half-lines indicated by a space.

4. And so the youth departed and journeyed far away
Until he found a village that near a forest lay:
And there he met a blacksmith he would be 'prenticed to,
To smite the glowing iron for him as other learners do.

How Seyfried came to a smith, and smote his anvil into the earth and the iron in two parts, and struck the master and 'prentices.

5. The iron he smote asunder, the anvil in the ground;
No chastisement or teaching to tame him could be found.
He struck the boy and master and dragged them both about:
The master often pondered, "I would he were without!"

Here the master sendeth Seyfried forth, thinking he would not return.

6. A wondrous dragon lay without beneath a linden tree;
Thither the master sent him and told the lad that he
Should seek a charcoal burner who dwelt close by the place,
And fetch some charcoal from him and bring it home apace.

Here Seyfried cometh to the linden tree where the dragon lay, and he killed it dead.

7. For thus the smith intended that worm should lay him low.
The lad came to the linden— he did not turn to go,
But stood his ground and slew it, that hero bold and good,
Then, mindful of the burner's coals, he sought him in the wood.

Here Seyfried covereth the snakes with trees, and fetcheth fire from the charcoal burner, and he burnt all of them with it.

8. And now he found a thicket where a great worm-kin lay,
Adders and toads and dragons, their number none might say,
Nor had he seen so many on any dale or hill.
He tore up striplings by the roots until he had his fill.

9. He threw them on the worm-kin that none could raise its head,
But all must bide oppressed there, so sore they were bestead.
Then to the charcoal burner he went, and got him fire,
And lit the fallen striplings: the worms were burnt entire!

Here Seyfried taketh fire from the charccal burner and would burn the snakes.

10. The horny scales were melted; they ran out like a brook.
Seyfried was 'stonished greatly: a single finger he took
And plunged it in and cooled it, and hard as steel it grew.
Then in that self-same brooklet he bathed his body too.

Here Seyfried smeareth himself and waxeth all horny, save only between the shoulders.

11. So he was made all horny save where the shoulders meet,
And there death overtook him and found a ready seat,
As ye shall hear related when this lay hath been done.
Then he sought princely Gibich's court where manhood's fame was won.

12. He served the King right gladly for his fair daughter's sake
Until King Gibich gave her; for Seyfried wished to take
The maiden and to wed her, but ere that thing might be

They suffered sore mischances and he wrought wondrously.

13. Now ye must hear me tell you how all the Niblung gold
Which was a treasure richer than any king might hold,
Was found by mighty Seyfried concealed behind a stone,
That dwarf Niblung had hidden and hoarded as his own.

14. Dwarf Niblung died in the mountain when his life-days were told,
And left three sons behind him to cherish all his gold;
They sat within the mountain and guarded it right well;
Among the Huns much slaughter grim for that same gold befell.

15. And many heroes perished upon the battle day
When combat raged the fiercest as ye shall hear me say;
And no one came forth living as ye must shortly learn,
Save noble Master Hildebrand and Dietrich, knight of Berne.

16. Worms is the name of a city that stands beside the Rhine,
And there a king hight Gibich had ruled a goodly time.
He and his dame together had three sons nobly born
And eke a daughter for whose sake many lives were soon forlorn.

17. Three sons there were, as I have said and eke a daughter fair;
One day the maid was standing beside a window there,
When suddenly a dragon came flying at noon-day,
And seized the gentle maiden and bore her far away.

Here a dragon cometh a-flying and fetcheth the maid Kriemhild away with him.

18. The castle was up-lighted as though it were on fire;
He took the maiden with him, that worm so fierce and dire,
And rose aloft and bore her high up into the sky:
Her father and her mother were standing sadly by.

19. He set her on a mountain rock that was both high and strong,
Its shadow fell a mile (less but a quarter) long;
The maiden's beauty was so dear unto that dragon grim,
She had no lack of food and drink while she abode with him.

20. He kept her in the mountain a four-years' space, I ween,
So that while she was captive no living man had seen
The maiden, who had sadly wept and had lamented sore,
When first she missed the world of men, for twelve long weeks, and more.

Here the dragon layeth his head in the maiden's lap, after that he had brought her to his rock, and resteth.

21. Upon the maiden's lap the worm laid down his heavy head;
So great his strength was that his size can not be told or said:
When he drew in his breath, or when he sped it out again,
The mountain rock, beneath his weight, was badly shaken then.

22. One Easter Day the dragon appeared in human guise.
" 'Twas evil," quoth the maiden, "to treat me in this wise.

My parents suffer anguish because of me, I ween;
Great is the woe my mother feels, who is a noble queen.

23. "Alas, kind Sir, thou knowest that many days have past
Since my father and my mother did look upon me last;
And also my dear brothers. If it may fitly be,
I pray thou'lt let me see them and be obliged to thee.

24. "If thou grant my departure and let me seek my home,
I pledge my head I will return back to this mighty stone.
For God's sake, noble master, grant me this one request,
And thenceforth I will gladly subserve to thy behest."

25. The monster spake to Kriemhild and gave her answer then:
"Thy father and thy mother thou shalt not see again,
Nor any other creature shall come before thine eye:
Body and soul must go to hell when thou shalt die!

26. "But, fair and tender maiden, be not ashamed of me:
Neither thy body nor thy soul shall now be reft from thee.
I shall become a man again five years from this same day,
And then, fair maiden, I shall take thy maidenhood away.

27. "And so thou must abide for me for five years and a day,
And when thou art a woman it shall be as I say,
And into hell shall thy soul go down and the body I have won,
Thou who art daughter of a king,— he shall know what I have done.

28. "The word I tell thee, maiden, is true eternally:
One single day in hell's abyss will be a year to thee;

And there until the judgment thou must forever stay.
I doubt if God will pity thee upon the final day."

29. "Great Jesu Christ, men teach me, and I have always heard,
That all creation knows thy might and must obey thy word;
In heaven and in earth all things are subject to thy might,
And even hell was broke for thee and subjugated quite.

30. "O Virgin Mary who in Heaven dost hold a queenly place,
I, an unhappy maiden, appeal me to thy grace;
As many clerks have hailed thee, thou maid of purity,
Come to my aid upon this rock as I have trust in thee.

31. "If my three brothers knew I were a captive on this stone,
Although their lives should pay for it, they'd come to fetch me home,
And eke my father with them; they'd help me in my need."
She wept so sore that from her eyes red tears began to bleed.

Here the King sendeth messengers throughout the land to seek for his daughter Kriemhild.

32. The King sent messengers about the land in search of her,
If any man might find her or tell him where she were,
And there was great lamenting and woe on every side
Until the maid was rescued by a hero bold and tried.

33. A bold youth then was living who was a doughty knight,
A rich king's son, and noble, and Seyfried he was hight,
And he was wont, because his arm and strength were of the best,

To catch wild lions and to hang them on the trees for jest!

34. When this same Seyfried had waxed great and reached his full manhood,
One morning he went riding and hunting in the wood;
He went with dogs and hunting hawks, the noble fearless knight,
And from the wild beasts there he claimed the forest as his right.

35. One of his knights ran forward before him in the wood,
And Seyfried followed after, the valiant knight and good,
And on the trace where once the worm had left behind his scent
When he had rapt the maiden, the hounds and Seyfried went.

36. For four days Seyfried followed and ever onwards pressed,
And all that time he took no drink nor nourishment or rest;
Until four morrows vanished unweariedly he went,
And climbed the mountain-heights and followed upon this wondrous scent.

Here Seyfried rideth in the forest.

37. Now he is quite entangled in a dark and gloomy place:
All paths become more faint to him and he hath lost the trace.
He spoke, "Great Jesu, what is this that I have chanced upon?"
His rescue of the princess had still to be begun.

38. Now Seyfried had waged battle and many a valiant fight,

And so five thousand dwarfs obeyed and served him of their might,
And gave the hero treasure and goods right willingly.
And he had slain a dreadful worm that ravaged terribly.

39. And now good Seyfried mounted unto the dragon's lair,
Never before had he beheld the like of what was there:
Both man and horse were wearied by that so steep ascent,
And so the hero turned his course and round the rocks he went.

40. When Seyfried the hero gazed upon that dreadful worm,
The knight exclaimed and spoke aloud what ye shall shortly learn:
"O Thou great God of Heaven, what wonder brought me here?
The devil hath deceived me and done this thing, I fear."

41. The darkness quickly fell about knight Seyfried then,
And quickly all his brachets were called to him again.
"Unless God will permit it," the knight spake hardily,
"I may not leave this darkened wood; there is no help for me."

42. He turned him to his horse, and wished to leave that lonely place,
But then he saw a dwarf that came through those dark woods apace:
His name was Eugeleine, his steed like coal was black,
And gold-adorned the garments were he wore upon his back.

Here the dwarf Eugelein cometh to Seyfried in the forest, and showeth him the dragon's rock.

43. He wore upon his body a robe of sable fur,
And very rich, as I have heard, all of his fellows were;

And no king ever was so great that he might not see fit
To wear his robe with honor and take great pride in it.

44. Upon his head he also wore a fine-wrought golden crown:
It had no peer upon the earth in treasure of renown.
And in the crown there glittered full many a precious stone:
They were unequalled jewels and matched themselves alone.

45. Dwarf Eugeleine spoke to him when he had seen the knight,
And what he said ye surely would wish to know aright.
He greeted him in seemly wise, that hero bold and good,
And said, "My lord, what is it that brings thee in this wood?"

46. "Now God reward thee, little man," knight Seyfried made reply,
"And let me know thy loyalty, for need of it have I.
If thou dost truly know me, tell me my father's name—
And tell my mother's also, for I know not these same."

47. Now hero Seyfried had been reared and had grown tall and great,
But did not know his parents nor what was their estate,
For he had been deprived of them and sent into the wood,
Where a master had had care of him and reared him to manhood.

48. He had the strength of many men, as much as twenty-four.
The dwarf replied to Seyfried, "I'll give thee of my lore.
Thy mother was hight Sieglind, and nobly born was she,
Thy father was King Siegmund who hath begotten thee.

49. "But, Seyfried, thou shouldst change thy path and turn about thy face,

If thou dost not leave quickly, thou wilt perish in this place.
There dwells upon this fastness a dreadful dragon grim,
And if he once beholds thee thou wilt be slain by him.

50. "And near this place there dwelleth a maiden fair to see,
Upon the mountain fastness— 'tis sooth I tell to thee;
Her family is Christian, and she is kingly born.
Unless God will protect her she is a wight forlorn.

51. "Her father is hight Gibich and ruleth by the Rhine;
The princess is called Kriemhild, a daughter of his line."
The hero Seyfried answered: "That maid was dear to me,
And in her father's country we pledged our loyalty."

52. When bold Seyfried had hearkened to the tale of her sad plight,
He went before the giant rock and thrust his sword upright,
And swore three oaths upon it (a trusty champion he),
He would not leave that self-same spot until he set her free.

53. Dwarf Eugelein addressed him and gave him answer plain:
"Seyfried, if thou art so intent to do rash things in vain,
And if thou swearest to rescue her from the stress wherein she's placed,
I beg thou wilt permit me to leave this wood in haste.

54. "Although thou werest conqueror over half of the earth,
And hadst ten sevens of tongues that served thee from thy birth,
And though both infidels and Christians were subject unto thee,

Still that fair maid must bide here, and thou must let her be."

55. But Seyfried answered quickly, "Nay, thou small mannikin,
I r[illegible] thy faith and prowess in the work I now begin.
P[illegible]e to free the damsel from the rock, and bring her down,
Else I will smite thy head off together with thy crown.

56. "Although my life is forfeit in her delivery,
My oath upon it, I am bound by faith and loyalty,
Unless God will permit it, whose might is everywhere,
I tell thee truly no man else may help her, though he dare."

Here Seyfried taketh the dwarf by the hair and smiteth him against the face of the rock.

57. And Seyfried felt such anger and wrath beyond compare,
He seized dwarf Eugelein fiercely and held him by the hair,
And smote him with such mighty blows against the great stone's face,
That his gold crown was shattered to pieces in that place.

58. He said, "Control thy anger, thou mighty, goodly man,
And I shall give thee counsel in all thing[illegible]t I can,
And loyally I'll show the trace to find[illegible]urthermore."
"Devil take it," said Seyfried, "why d[illegible] thou not before?"

59. He said, "Near by there dwelleth [illegible] the giant Kuperan:
He holds these meadows and a horde of giants in his bann,—

He can alone unfasten the closed rock with his key."
"Show me him then," said Seyfried, "and set the maiden free.

60. "Show me him very quickly if thou hold thy body dear."
The dwarf said, "If I do it 'twill mean a fight, I fear,
So great a combat for thee as no man ever saw."
"The greater joy," said Seyfried, "for him I have no awe."

61. The dwarf conducted Seyfried; on the mountain side they yode,
And by the rocky fastness where Kuperan abode.
So Seyfried stood beside it and in loud tones he cried,
And summoned forth the giant upon the mountain-side.

62. The giant heard, and from the rock he forthwith darted out,
Carrying in his hand a staff that was of iron, and stout.
He cried, "Thou foolish youngster, what is it brings thee here?
I think that in this forest thy end of life is near.

63. "Without a doubt I tell thee thy body is forlorn."
The hero Seyfried answered, "To save us God was born,
And He will not desert me, but lend me of His might,
And thou wilt therefore yield me that maiden fair and bright

64. "Because thou hast earned that always we must cry 'Shame on thee,
That thou hast held her captive in so great misery,
And such distress and hardship here in the mountain's pit:
For more than four long years she hath remained in it."

65. Then the false wretch waxed angry, and his mood was so grim
He lifted up his iron club and smote it down on him;

That mighty staff was wielded in such a potent wise
That more than half above the trees it stood against the skies.

Here Horned Seyfried fighteth with the giant Kuperan for the key.

66. The giant struck at Seyfried and wielded many a blow,
Into the earth the staff went down because he hurled it so;
He dealt his blows with mighty force and quickness rare to find,
But Seyfried still more quickly sprang full ten yards behind.

67. And ten yards back again he leapt to struggle with his foe;
The giant grasped his staff again and raised it for a blow,
But Seyfried caused his blood to spurt and wounded him right sore
With wounds so deep the like of them was never seen before.

68. The monster sprang up quickly and ran at him again.
"Thou little fellow, hearken," he shouted at him then,
"Yield up thy life as forfeit; thy time has surely come."
"Thou liest unless God wills it," said Seyfried, fearless one.

69. Now when the faithless giant felt all the wounds he gave,
He fled into the mountain and left behind his stave.
Seyfried had made him suffer almost a death-torment,
He thought now of the maiden who sat in banishment.

70. The giant bound his wounds up and armed him hastily.
He girded on a bryny that costly was to see,

Of gold it was; a dragon with blood had made it hard:
It was the world's best bryny if Ortnit's be out-barred.

71. The giant took a mighty sword and bound it to his side.
Its haft was fitted to his hand and was both long and wide.
So keen that sword was that for price a realm might well be given:
When it was drawn against a man his hope of life was riven.

72. He set a burnished helmet of steel upon his head
That glittered like the sunlight that makes the ocean red;
He took upon his arm a shield wide as a city gate,
A hand's breadth thick it measured, for it was very great.

73. And now the monster issued forth out from his rocky cave;
Within his hand a second time he bore an iron stave.
And manifold its edges were, and cutting, sooth to tell:
It was as bright and clear to see as any tower bell.

74. The monster said to Seyfried, "Tell me, thou little wight—
The devil pay thee for it— what wrong wouldst thou requite
That thou shouldst try to slay me beside my own house-door?"
"Thou liest; I but called thee out; I wish to do no more."

75. The mighty giant answered, "My curses fall on thee!
I'll pay thee roundly for it that thou hast come to me.
Thou shalt be taught it had been best if thou hadst stepped aside:

Now thou must learn to hang for it, thou and thy foolish pride."

76. "Thou graceless wretched villain, God will not suffer thee;
Truly I did not seek thee out to find a gallows tree.
But help me win the maiden from where she's held in thrall,
Or else, I tell thee plainly, thy span of life is small!"

77. The monster made him answer, "I give thee warning fair,
Thou shalt obtain no help from me to win the maiden there.
I shall prevent thee from it— thou knowest not my strength—
And cure thee of such rescues of captive maids at length.

78. "I tell thee this in warning: betake thyself away."
"I have been ready," answered Seyfried, "since early in the day."
The champions rushed to combat within that forest dim;
They were bold fighters and they smote with mighty strokes and grim.

79. And from the strength of both of them there waxed so great a fight
That sparks of fire were seen to glint upon their helmets bright.
Despite the hardness of that shield— the one the giant bore—
Bold Seyfried deftly smote it in a hundred bits and more.

80. No better were the other arms that were the giant's trust:
Seyfried cut off the bryny with many a doughty thrust.

The giant Kuperan stood now quite over-run with gore,
For there were sixteen wounds that he upon his body bore.

81. Loud cried the giant to him; his woe was great indeed:
"Thou noble lord and hero, spare me in my great need!
Thy body's strength is matchless; thy might is unsurpassed.
All honor to thee, for in sooth no coward's heart thou hast!

82. "Thou art a little fellow and standest here alone,
And yet I can not down thee or win thee for mine own;
But thou shouldst leave me living and I will give to thee
My bryny, sword, and eke myself in full subserviency."

83. "With pleasure," answered Seyfried, the hero bold and true.
"If thou wilt yield the maiden as I have bid thee do."
"I pledge thee by the faith I owe, thou needest feel no doubt,
The maid shall leave the mountain and quickly stand without."

84. They pledged their faith together though strangers they were, both;
Seyfried the mighty hero gave honor to his oath;
But Kuperan was faithless; he honored no sworn seal,
And Seyfried had from him no good; he profited no deal.

Here the giant Kuperan sweareth he will help Seyfried win the maiden from the rock.

85. Unto that bold knight Seyfried the giant spoke; said he,
"God knows, my good companion, my wounds are hurting me."

Then from his body he tore off his silken vestment good,
To tend the faithless monster's wounds and bind as best he could.

86. The mighty giant told him, "Now wit thou well, my friend,
Here is the rocky entrance and here the mountain's end;
We must regard it closer, thou worthy champion."
Now must be told what they both did: it shall be quickly done.

87. Then side by side they took a path along a waterway;
But soon the giant took his sword and swung it, sooth to say,
And as the hero Seyfried walked before him on that track,
The faithless monster followed and smote him in the back.

88. He gave to mighty Seyfried a very dastard's blow,
So that the noble hero beneath his shield lay low;
And all his semblance seemed to tell that he was surely dead,
While from his mouth and from his nose the smitten hero bled.

Here the giant Kuperan breaketh his trust with Seyfried, and smiteth him from behind, so that he falls to earth.

89. But as the hero Seyfried lay low beneath his shield
The kindly dwarf hight Eugel appeared upon the field
He took a magic mist-cap and threw it on the knight
And from the giant's hatred he saved him in despite

Here the dwarf putteth a mist-cap upon Horned Seyfried, so that the giant Kuperan might not see him

90. The giant ran among the trees and sought the man he lost.
"Is it God that hath undone me, or hath the devil crossed?
Is this God's sign or marvel? Thou stoodest here but now,
And then thou layest stricken— but thou art lost, I trow."

91. The winsome dwarf began to laugh to hear the giant's plight.
He lifted up the hero and set him up aright,
And there he sat a little while until his thoughts began
To come back to the knight again, that sorely wounded man.

92. And when the hero Seyfried came to himself again,
He saw the little Euglein who sat beside him then.
"God thank, thee, little man," he said, "this falls out wondrously,
There is no other word to say: thou hast done well by me."

93. Then Eugelein gave answer, "I grant thee 'twas well done,
For worse fate would have happened had I not chanced to come.
If thou wilt take my counsel give up that maiden fair:
In this disguise flee from thy foe while he is unaware."

94. The hero Seyfried answered: "Nay, that can never be.
Although I had a thousand lives— I swear this unto thee—
Each one of them I still would risk to save that maiden fair:
And I shall seek her once again and try my fortune there."

95. Now like a valiant knight he tore the cap from off his head,
And sword in hand, upon his foe, with mighty strokes he sped.
He gave the giant eight deep wounds and called out to the maid
That Kuperan was nearly dead: she should not be afraid.

96. "Thou once didst use upon me all of thy body's might;
Alone thou standest here again and art undaunted quite!"
"And if this fight should kill me and lay me in the grave,
No man on earth could find her— nor thou, my hero brave!"

97. This gave the hero Seyfried a very anxious thought.
He loved that maiden very well for whose dear sake he wrought:
Thus he must spare the faithless man who broke the oath he swore;
He said, "Thou mayest live and walk if thou go on before.

98. "But lead me fairly forward to the maid, as I have said,
Else, though the world should perish, I will smite off thy head."
And so the faithless monster, obedient at need,
Conducted Seyfried on the path as the hero had decreed.

99. They sought the rock together, great Kuperan and he;
The faithless giant was not slow to take in hand the key.

From underneath the rocky cliff was opened and revealed:
Eight fathoms deep beneath the earth the door had been concealed.

100. And when the rock was opened and thrown apart at last,
Bold Seyfried did not lose the key, but kept it close and fast;
He caught it very quickly and took it from the lock.
He said, "Thou must go forward and lead me up the rock."

101. They both waxed very weary as they climbed up the height.
And when the hero Seyfried beheld the maiden bright,
She wept for very gladness, as I have heard men tell,
And said, "Within my father's house, Sir Knight, I knew thee once right well."

102. The maiden said, "Be welcome, bold hero Seyfried mine!
How fare my sire and mother in Worms upon the Rhine?
And also my dear brothers who are three noble kings?
Upon my faith, but let me hear what news thy coming brings?"

103. Then hero Seyfried answered, "Thou need'st no longer cry:
We shall make haste and leave this place together, thou and I.
For I shall be thy rescuer and save thee in thy need,
Or else I shall go down in death upon this spot, indeed."

104. "Now God reward thee, Seyfried, thou brave and dauntless knight.
And yet I fear thou canst not win against the worm in fight.

He is the fiercest devil that I have ever seen,
And if thou dost but see him thou'lt grant it's true, I ween."

105. But Seyfried answered boldly, "It cannot be so bad!
I will not quickly yield the fruit of all the toil I've had.
Against one faithless villain I have had bitter strife,
And though the Devil followed I'd answer with my life."

106. "Now God reward thee, Seyfried, that thou hast, for my sake,
Performed this deed of prowess and wilt more undertake;
And if God will restore me to my land happily,
I pledge my very faith that I will have none else but thee."

107. Now from the rock the giant, bold Kuperan, stepped out.
He said, "Here lieth hidden a noble sword and stout.
To conquer that fierce dragon its blade is wondrous fit:
There is no other sword on earth that can accomplish it."

108. There was much truth in what he said about the gleaming blade.
When Seyfried was unguarded, that hero unafraid,
The faithless giant struck him another bitter wound,
So that upon the Dragon's Rock the champion almost swooned.

109. And now he seized the giant; both met with mighty shock.
Great was the maiden's terror; there was trembling of the rock.
The maid began to wring her hands; with a loud voice she cried:

"O Thou great God in Heaven, give strength to the just side!"

Here the giant all but casteth Seyfried from the rock.

110. "And if thou, Seyfried, losest thy dear life for my sake,
Within my heart forever great grief shall be awake,
And I shall make an end of my manifold distress:
I'll cast myself from this high rock and fall down spiritless.

111. "Take care, thou hero Seyfried and battle warily;
Remember all thy struggles and think also of me."
Then answered doughty Seyfried, "Thou fair, exalted maid,
I shall take care to shield me; thou need'st not be afraid."

112. And so the champions wrestled; the maiden stood close by,
And now the faithless giant was doomed to yield and die.
Seyfried attacked the monster where he was wounded sore;
The other scarce endured it, so fiercely Seyfried tore.

113. The giant hath begun to bend before him, to the earth.
"Let me but live, and spare me, thou hero of great worth!
Thou knight of dauntless courage, I beg thee, set me free;
Three times I have been faithless, but I rue it heartily."

114. The hero Seyfried answered, "Thy speech avails thee nought.
I have already looked upon the maiden whom I sought."
He took him by the arms and cast him downward, suddenly.
He broke in many pieces. The maiden laughed with glee.

Here Horned Seyfried throweth the giant down from the Dragon's Rock.

115. Now when the hero Seyfried had gained the victory,
He went before the maiden as knight of courtesy:
"Thou fairest of all maidens, thy weeping now is done;
I am recovered wholly; through thee my meed is won.

116. "But I must help thee quickly and lead thee forth apace,
Else, if I tarry, I remain for thee dead in this place."
"Now God reward thee, Seyfried, who knowest nought of fear,
I dread lest dire misfortune should overtake us here."

117. The hero Seyfried answered, "If we must suffer woe,
I heartily regret to learn that it must needs be so.
Although I have been living since four long days have past,
I have not drunk or rested nor have once broke my fast."

118. Euglein the dwarf, who heard this, was very sore dismayed
At Seyfried's wrathful fury, and eke the royal maid.
The dwarf replied to Seyfried, "Of food there is great stock,
And I will fetch thee plenty upon the Dragon's Rock.

119. "I'll bring thee food and drink, as much as thou canst need or crave
To last thee for a fortnight." He bore it from the cave,
And many dwarfs attended to serve upon him there,
And eke the royal maiden gave Seyfried special care.

120. Before a bite was taken they heard a roaring sound
As if the mighty mountain had fallen to the ground.

The lovely maiden trembled and cried aloud in fear.
She said: "Dear knight, I doubt me thy end is very near.

121. "And though the whole world helped us and came to give us aid,
We two are lost forever, Sir Seyfried, I'm afraid."
Then Seyfried answered, "Who is this would take our lives away
That God gave us, and make an end ere the appointed day?"

122. Then Seyfried took his silken shift; the maiden's face wiped he,
For she was hot and sweated for pure anxiety.
Seyfried said, "Do not sorrow while I remain with thee!"
The dwarfs who had been serving them were now compelled to flee.

123. While these two lovers tarried and to each other spoke,
Three miles away the dragon approached with store of smoke
And flame attendant on him, plain for all folk to see.
For three rods' space before him the fire burnt wondrously.

Here Seyfried and the maiden are on the Dragon's Rock and would fain eat, and then the dragon comes, fetching sixty young dragons with him.

124. This chanced because the dragon in this guise was accursed,
Wherefore a devil always was with him, last and first;
He had a dragon's semblance and yet he felt no pain;
In soul and thought and senses he was glad of it, and fain.

125. But he might use his reason in proper human wise;
One day in every five years he changed, and in the guise
Of comely youth appeared again as he had been ere he
Was cursèd by a woman for too great lechery.

126. As dragon still he had desire for maiden's loveliness;
He captured many of them and held them in duress
For five long years until he changed into a youth, and he
Might have his pleasure of them. Else it might never be.

127. Now that the hero Seyfried would take her from that lair
After he fetched her thither and fed and kept her there,
The dragon came back flying, and dreadful was his ire:
He wished to fall upon them and burn them up with fire.

128. The maiden counselled Seyfried and gave him sage advice
To go with her in hiding lest the dragon in a trice
Should throw them over in his flight and hurl them in a pit
That was beneath the mountain. They fled away from it.

129. They hid away and waited until the dragon came
And cooled himself a little from all his heat and flame.
The devil-creature flew to earth and caused the rock to shake
That since creation had been firm; but now it needs must quake.

130. Now Seyfried had retained the sword that Kuperan had said
Alone would kill the dragon; Seyfried was sore bestead

When the faithless giant on the rock had sprung on him as he
Was bending over on the brink, and smote him treacherously.

131. Now with this sword came Seyfried and sprang forth from the cave
And soon the worm had felt the force of the mighty blows he gave.
The dragon tore at Seyfried's shield and seized it with his claws:
Hot sweat of anguish ran on him, and there was worthy cause.

Here Seyfried fighteth on the rock with the dragon.

132. Their combat was so fierce, the rock was made to glow entire:
It was like red-hot iron that's taken from the fire.
It was the dragon that had caused all things to wax so hot:
Against Seyfried he sent the flame: in hellish wise it shot.

133. So monstrous was the combat upon the mountain-side,
The dwarfs fled to the forest— they could not well abide—
They fled in haste and each one took the quickest path away.
The mountain almost vanished upon that fatal day.

134. Two sons of Nibelung had dwelt within the mountain-side:
Their father's treasure they had kept and guarded all that tide.
But when the mountain staggered and seemed about to fall
The dwarf Kings bore it out again; they wished to save it all.

135. They hid it on the mountain's face beneath the dragon's den,
And under rocks, in safety. But Seyfried found it when
(If you will hear me tell it) dwarf Euglein was his guide.
As yet he had not seen the gold brought from the mountain-side.

136. The Nibelungs stored it away; the treasure had been laid,
But Eugelein had not remarked, he was so sore afraid;
He and the other dwarfs had fear that if the dragon won
There would be little time until their lives would all be done.

137. Now with the press of many dwarfs he lost sight of the maid.
The dragon knew the path and door near which she always stayed.
When he had need of cooling he bode in the passage way;
He never wandered far from her while she in slumber lay.

138. Whenever winter-time had come the dragon forth would go
To seek the maiden's food, and she remained far down below
Full fifty fathoms in the earth. He guarded her right well,
And lay before the entrance. Now further I must tell.

139. The rock was brightly lighted, but Seyfried had to flee
The dragon's heat, because from it he suffered cruelly.
Around and all about him the flames shot blue and red,
And Seyfried hid him from them, for he was sore bestead.

140. So Seyfried and the maiden went in the mountain, there to wait
Until the dragon's fervor might lessen and abate.
They stepped aside together, and there the hero found
A hoard he thought the dragon's assembled on the ground.

141. Strange was that treasure to him. The damsel spake, distressed:
"Sir Seyfried, there remains for thee the direst sort of test.
The dragon came with sixty mates, and they bear venom, sure:
If they are still upon the rock thy strength may not endure.

Here Seyfried fleeth into a cave from the great heat of the dragon and resteth until he is cooled, and cometh unwitting upon a treasure that had been King Niblung's the dwarf.

142. The hero Seyfried said to her, "I've heard men often say,
That he who truly trusts in God will not be cast away.
But if we two must perish, thou maiden without peer,
I cry God's mercy that I tried to give thee succor here."

Here Seyfried goeth up on the rock and fighteth the dragon, whereat all the other dragons fly away.

143. And now he hath become right grim at thought that he was fey:
He grasped his sword and mounted upon the narrow way.
Straightway the other dragons, companions of that one,
Flew thence in all directions from which they first had come.

144. The old one tarried still and gave to Seyfried great a-do.
Forth from his mouth there darted great flames, both red and blue.
So often he smote Seyfried the hero fell to earth;
He had not known such evil plight on any day since birth.

145. The dragon, like a devil, smote Seyfried with his tail
Until he might no longer stand; he thought he might avail
To cast him down the mountain that was so steep and high.
Seyfried sprang from the dragon's coils and stood in safety by.

146. Seyfried attacked the dragon upon his horny hide;
He gave him many doughty blows before, and eke behind.
He hacked and hewed upon his scales with all his might and main,
The while he suffered from him discomfort and sore pain.

147. The dragon's hide was softened by Seyfried's doughty blade.
His heat was also slackened as if a fire were made
By dampening to burn less fierce which had been all aglow.
His scales were melted, and they ran in a stream that fell below.

148. The worm received a mighty blow and he was straitly cleft
Into two parts that fell to earth. The dragon was bereft
Of life, and Seyfried threw him down. He flew to bits below.

The maiden ran to meet him.— Her greeting was not slow.

Here Seyfried hath cut up the dragon, and he casteth down the pieces.

149. He fell a-swooning from the heat, and lay there, lacking wit;
So great his weariness, he scarce came from the fainting-fit;
He could not see or hear a sound nor recognize a soul:
His face had lost its color, his mouth was black as coal.

Here Seyfried lieth in a swoon from great heat and weariness.

150. When he had long time lain there and rested in his plight,
He sat upright again, and 'gan to seek his heart's delight.
He saw the maiden near, like one who miserably lay dead.
Seyfried cried out, "Ah, God, I am in truth right sore bestead."

151. He laid him down beside her and said, "God pity me,
Must thou be taken home in death?" and clipped her tenderly.
But now dwarf Euglein came and said to Seyfried, "Lord,
I bring an herb by which the maid shall quickly be restored."

Here Seyfried and the maid lie prostrate, and she is sick and sore distressed for his sake, and then cometh the dwarf Eugelein and setteth a wort in her mouth, by the which she is straightway made whole.

152. And when that herb was given her and on her mouth was laid,
She sat up straight and was restored to herself, that lovely maid.
She said, "Thou noble hero, wilt thou not comfort me?"
She kissed Seyfried upon the mouth and halsed him lovingly.

153. Now to the hero spake the dwarf Euglein, the little man:
"This mount of ours was erstwhile seized by giant Kuperan;
A myriad dwarfs were prisoners and vassals unto him,
Who held our country in his fee, that faithless giant grim.

154. "But thou hast brought us succor and thou hast set us free,
And we shall serve thee in all things where our strength may be,
And we shall give thee escort, thee and this maiden fine:
I'll point the way and lead thee to Worms upon the Rhine."

155. They went into the mountain into his dwelling place,
The dwarf gave food and wine to them and fed them, of his grace.
Whatever heart of man might think or wish as heart's desire
Was in the cave abundantly: it was their own entire.

156. Now Seyfried took departure from King Euglein, the small,
And from the Niblung brothers— the three were monarchs all.
The worthy kings addressed him, "Seyfried, thou hero, know
Our royal father Niblung died of a mighty woe.

157. "If Kuperan the giant had robbed thee of thy breath,
Then all the dwarfs within this rock had been in pain of death.
Wherefore we gave the warning and pointed out the key
Which opened up the rock whereon the maid awaited thee.

158. "But all of us are now set free, released from so great harm,
And, noble King, we are in debt to the strength of thy right arm.
Wherefore we shall go with thee and bear thee company,
Eo see that no mischance befall to the maiden, or to thee.

Here Seyfried setteth the maiden behind him, and he fares forth to go home, and the dwarfs offer to keep him company. But he sendeth all of them back, save only the dwarf Euglein, the which he keepeth by him to show him the way.

159. "Nay," said the hero Seyfried, "I will fare on alone."
He put the maiden back of him and sent the small folk home,
Excepting only Euglein who followed him along.
Then Seyfried said to Euglein, "Tell me, thou ruler strong,

160. "Wilt thou not let me share thine art that's hight astrology?
Upon the rock of dragons this morning thou didst see
At dawn upon the heavens and read my future fate.
What will befall us? And how long will this princess be my mate?"

161. The dwarf Euglein made answer, "'I will tell thee verily:
She will be thine for but eight years, that is the fate I see.
And after that it is decreed thy full course shall be run,
And on thee innocent at last foul murder will be done.

162. "But thy death will soon find vengeance through thy fair and loyal wife,
And many a man must pay for it by yielding of his life,
So that at last upon this earth all knighthood comes to nought.
Was ever hero's wiving with so great sorrow fraught?"

163. Seyfried the hero answered, "If I so soon am slain,
And so much vengeance follows, I reck not of the pain,
Nor who it is that slays me." But Euglein made reply,
"Yea, but this lovely damsel will meet her death thereby."

164. Seyfried replied to Euglein, "Now thou mayest journey home."
Unwillingly they parted. Euglein returned alone
Into the mountain fastness. But Seyfried called to mind
The treasure he left lying: it was his proper find.

165. Two wights there were, thought Seyfried, who might have won the gold,
It might have been the dragon, or else the giant bold;
The worm might have amassed it by dint of human wit,
That then, restored to manhood, he might be lord of it.

166. He thought, "If I have conquered this mountain by my might,
The trove that lies within it belongs to me by right."
He ran and fetched the treasure and piled it on his steed:
The damsel was beside him and gave him help at need.

167. They went down to the river, when to himself thought he,
"If I shall live so short a time what good is it to me?
And if so many warriors must die for sake of mine,
Who will survive to own it?" and thrust it in the Rhine.

Here Seyfried sinketh the treasure in the Rhine, that he had found on Dragon's Rock.

168. He knew not that the owners who had brought out the gold
Were loyal brothers two, the sons of Nibelung the old.
But dwarf Euglein knew nothing of all these things that passed.
He thought the hoard was lying in the mountain, safe and fast.

169. Now messengers sought Gibich and told him that the maid
Was found again; her coming would not be long delayed.
They told how she was rescued from that unlovely drake.
Gibich called forth his nobles and commons, for her sake.

170. Then all folk fared towards Seyfried and gave him welcoming,
Such honor never was bestowed on emperor or king,
And Gibich sent his messengers to go throughout the land
And to the kings and nobles they gave word on every hand,

171. And bade them all assemble to share in the high-tide
That was to be at Worms. They came, princes from every side,

And they were nobly entertained as with such guests is due.
The land was full of visitors and full of feasting too!

172. The high-tide feasting lasted throughout twice seven days,
And there were knightly pleasures and races and tournays:
Full sixteen joustings were there, at which they took their course,
And food and fodder were at hand for every man and horse.

173. Seyfried was ever busied to give strength to the just.
A man might carry gold, and yet he knew no fear. Such trust
Was there through Seyfried's strength all things were well beseen.
Said Gunther, "What the devil, what does this hero mean,

174. "Who bears himself so proudly to put the rest to shame,
Though they be just as noble as he, in family name;
But all day long he goes about in weapons and in mail,
As if he looked upon our knights as men of no avail."

175. "He is my sister's husband," said Hagen, called the Grim,
"If he desires to hold the Rhine- land subject unto him,
He shall be made to know it; he may not overlook,
For I am first to take revenge: this thing I may not brook."

176. "This sister's husband, Seyfried!" the hero Gernot spake.
"I'd yield my hand with pleasure and set it down as stake,

If but our father Gibich had courage like to mine.
I say, no good hath come to him from Seyfried, all this time."

177. Such hatred the young princes against Sir Seyfried bore
That finally they did achieve the evil deed they swore:
And Seyfried was slain by them. Beside a running brook
Grim Hagen smote him in the wood and thus his life he took.

178. The blow fell twixt the shoulders while he was unaware,
Bending above the water to drink and cool him there.
They had departed from the knights and stood apart in speech:
On Hagen was commandment placed: his blow should Seyfried reach.

179. He who would hear this further and know of all the deeds
Of Kriemhilde's three brethren will learn it if he reads
The tale of Seyfried's high-tide, and what was there begun
And wrought thereafter for eight years: but now this tale is done.

THE TALE OF TROY

INTRODUCTION TO THE TALE OF TROY

Probably no dull and tasteless narrative has had so distinguished a later history as the story of the fall of Troy by "Dares the Phrygian." This shameless literary forgery, purporting to be a translation from the Greek, was probably composed in the sixth century, and it not only circulated widely in the Middle Ages, but was regarded as an authentic historical document. Perhaps one reason why it gained so much credence is that the supposed author claims to have been an eye-witness to the events he described. Moreover, Homer was not read because of the general ignorance of Greek until the fifteenth century. There was another compendious survey of the Trojan war, also a forgery, purporting to be written by an eye-witness "Dictys the Cretan." This second version was less important as a literary source in Western Europe, however, than was Dares.

Among the distinguished authors who depended upon the account by Dares was Benoit de Sainte-Maure, who in the twelfth century recreated the dry Latin narrative in the shape of a long chivalrous romance, in which the warriors, although bearing the names of Greeks and Trojan heroes, nevertheless behave precisely like medieval knights. It was Benoit who first introduced the love-story between Troilus and Cressida, which later became the paramount interest of writers who used this material. From Dares, then, through Benoit de Sainte-Maure, come indirectly the famous tales by Guido della Colonna, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Raoul Lefère, Caxton, Lydgate, and others, not to mention many anonymous versions. Nothing could be more indicative of the creative power of medieval imagination than a comparison of any of these treatments with the *Fall of Troy* by Dares Phrygius.

The text of this translation is that of the Delphin edition, London, 1825.

THE HISTORY OF THE FALL OF TROY

By DARES THE PHRYGIAN

Cornelius Nepos to Sallustius Crispus, greetings.

While I was busily engaged at Athens, I came upon the history of Dares the Phrygian, written by his own hand, as the title indicates, which he committed to memory concerning the Greeks and Trojans. With the greatest devotion I applied myself to this task, and translated it at once. I thought best to make no changes by adding or subtracting anything, lest it might appear to be my own. I chose rather, if I might, to turn the writing truly and simply into Latin, according to the word, so that they who read may know how these events occurred: whether they should judge truer the things that Dares the Phrygian committed to memory—a man who lived and fought while the Greeks were laying siege to the Trojans,—or whether Homer is to be believed—a man who was born many years later: concerning which matter a judgment was given at Athens by which Homer was considered as a madman, for that he described gods as having waged war with men. But enough of this. Let us turn to our promise.

The History of the Fall of Troy.

I. King Peleas had a brother Æson. The son of Æson was Jason, a man excellent in valor; and he held as guests all those who dwelt under his rule, and was loved of them right dearly. When King Peleas saw that Jason was liked by all men, he took fear lest he be harmed by him, and cast him forth from his kingdom. He told Jason that there was a ram's fleece in Colchis, worthy of his valor; and he prom-

ised him all sorts of things if he would bear it off from thence. When Jason heard this he told King Peleas that he wished to go thither, provided companions and assistance were not lacking, for he was a man of bold spirit desirous of seeing all places; and he thought that he would become more widely famed if he might carry off the golden fleece of Colchis. King Peleas summoned a wright of Argos and commanded him to construct the fairest kind of ship, according to the desire of Jason. The rumor spread abroad throughout all Greece that a ship was being builded for Jason to go to Colchis in quest of the golden fleece. Friends and strangers came to Jason and pledged themselves to go with him. Jason gave them thanks, and asked that they be ready when the proper time should arrive. When that time had come, Jason sent letters to those who had promised to go with him, and they came together by the ship, which was hight Argo. King Peleas commanded the necessary things to be stored in the ship, and he exhorted Jason and his companions to be bold of heart in accomplishing what they aimed to do. It appeared that this affair would win great fame for Greece, and also for them. It is not for us to chronicle those who took their departure with Jason: let him who would learn to know of them, read the *Argonautica*.

II. Jason took his ship to the port of Simois when he reached Phrygia. All of them disembarked. It was told to Laomedon King of the Trojans that a marvelous ship had entered the port of Simois bearing youths from Greece. When Laomedon heard this he was greatly perturbed: he thought it would be a common peril if the Greeks were to make this their habit, and keep coming to his shores in boats. So he sent men down to the harbor to bid the Greeks depart from his territory, and he told them that if they did not obey him, he would cast them out by force of arms. Jason and his companions resented their cruel treatment by Laomedon when they had done no injury: at

the same time they feared the numbers of the barbarians if they should offer to remain in defiance of the command, for they might be completely crushed. Since they were not ready for battle, they embarked in their ships, set out for Colchis, carried off the fleece, and returned home.

III. Hercules took it ill that he had been thus shamefully treated by King Laomedon together with those who had gone along with Jason to Colchis; and he went to see Castor and Pollux in Sparta. With these he arranged it that they should avenge his injuries with him, lest Laomedon should go unpunished for keeping them out of his country and his port. He said they would have many to help them, if they two would agree. Castor and Pollux promised to do all that Hercules desired. Leaving them, he went to Salamis and sought Telemon: he asked him to go with him to Troy to avenge his injuries with him. Telemon said he was ready for anything that Hercules desired. Thence he went to Peleus in Phthia and asked him to go with him to Troy; Peleus promised to go. Thence he went to Nestor in Pylos: Nestor asked him why he came. Hercules said he was sorely aggrieved, and wished to lead an army into Phrygia. Nestor praised Hercules, and promised what he wished. When Hercules had learned the will of all of them, he made ready twelve ships and chose his fighting men. When the time for the departure had been settled, he sent letters to those whom he had asked; when they had come with their men, they set out for Phrygia, and they arrived at Sigeum by night. Then Hercules, Telamon and Peleus led out the army from the ships, leaving behind Castor, Pollux and Nestor as a guard. Laomedon came down to the sea with a band of horsemen, and he began to fight. Hercules had gone on to Troy, and he began to fight the unguarded folk who were in the town. When King Laomedon heard that the city was being attacked by the foe, he returned to Ilium; and coming up against the Greeks on the way, he was killed by Hercules. Tele-

mon entered the town of Ilium first: Hercules gave him Hesione, daughter of King Laomedon, as a gift, because of his bravery. The sons of Laomedon, who were with him then, were killed. Priam was in Phrygia, where his father Laomedon had put him in charge of an army. Hercules and those men who were come with him took great booty and carried it down to their ships. Thence they decided to go home.

IV. Telemon took Hesione with him. When it was reported to Priam that his father had been killed, the citizens plundered, the booty borne away, and his sister handed over as a gift, he sorely resented that Phrygia had been so shamefully treated by the Greeks. He went to Ilium with his wife Hecuba and his children, Hector, Alexander, Deiphobus, Helenus, Troilus, Andromache, Cassandra, and Polyxena. There were other sons born of concubines, but none were reckoned of the royal family save those born of lawful wives. When Priam came to Ilium he made no delay, but built more ample walls, and fortified the city exceeding well, lest they should be taken by surprise as his father Laomedon had been. He also built a palace, and he consecrated there an altar to Jupiter Stator. He sent Hector to Paeonia. He made gates in Ilium: their names are the Antenorian, Dardanian, Ilian, Scæan, Thymbræan, and Trojan gates. Then, when he saw that Ilium was thus strengthened, he abode his time. Since it seemed right to him to get satisfaction for his father's wrongs, he summoned Antenor and told him that he desired to send him into Greece as a legate: although he had suffered grave injuries done by those who had come thither with an army, both in the matter of the death of his father and in the abduction of Hesione, he would suffer all these things quietly if Hesione were returned to him.

V. Antenor embarked as Priam commanded, and set out to see Peleus in Magnesia. Peleus received him with three days' hospitality; on the fourth day he asked him why he

came. Antenor said what Priam had commanded: he asked the Greeks that Hesione be returned. When Peleus heard this he took it ill, for he saw that this touched him close: he ordered him to leave his land. Antenor embarked and sailed to Telamon in Salamis; he asked him to restore Priam's sister Hesione to him, for it was not just to hold a damsel of royal blood in servitude so long. Telamon replied to Antenor that he had done nought to Priam: he would give up no one who had been given to him for his valor, and for this reason he bade Antenor depart from his island. Antenor embarked and went to Achæa. Faring thence to Castor and Pollux, he asked them to give satisfaction to Priam and return his sister Hesione to him. Castor and Pollux denied that injury had been done to Priam, but they said that Laomedon had done them injury first, and they commanded Antenor to depart. Thence he sought Nestor at Pylus, and told him why he had come. When he had hearkened to him, he asked him why in the name of all the gods he had dared to come to Greece, since the Greeks had first received hurt from the Phrygians. When Antenor perceived that he was gaining nothing, and was being shamefully treated by the Greeks, he embarked and went home. He told King Priam how each one had answered and how he had been treated by them; and at the same time he urged Priam to make war on them.

VI. At once Priam summoned his sons and all his friends, Antenor, Anchises, Æneas, Ucalegon, Bucolion, Panthus, Lampon, and all the sons born of concubines. When they had come together, he told them that Antenor had been sent as legate into Greece, to get satisfaction of those who had slain his father by the return of Hesionè; that the Greeks had treated him shamefully, and Antenor had gained nought from them: since they would not do his will, he thought it best to send an army into Greece to fetch away the booty from them, lest the Greeks hold the barbarians in derision. And Priam exhorted his sons to be

leaders in this affair, but especially Hector, for he was the oldest; and Hector said that he was right willing to obey his father's desire and avenge the death of Laomedon his grandfather and whatever other injuries the Greeks had put upon the Trojans, lest they go unpunished: but he feared they might not be able to carry through what they undertook; there would be many allies of Greece, and the men of Europe were very warlike; Asia had always had a life of sloth, and therefore lacked a fleet.

VII. Alexander began to urge that they make ready a fleet to send to Greece, and he offered himself as leader of this expedition if his father willed it: he said he had the greatest confidence in the good-will of the gods, and that he would fare home from Greece with great glory, having defeated their foes. For once when he had gone out hunting in the forest of Ida, Mercury had led before him in a dream Venus and Minerva and Juno, for him to judge amongst them as to their beauty. At that time Venus had promised him, if he would adjudge her beauty greater than theirs, that she would give him that dame who appeared most beautiful in all Greece. When he heard this, he had judged Venus fairest of all; and for this reason Priam might will suppose that Venus would be ally unto Alexander. Deiphobus said he liked well the counsel of Alexander: he hoped the Greeks would make amends and restore Hesione if, as was arranged, a fleet were sent into Greece. Helenus started to prophesy that the Greeks would come and overthrow Ilium, and slay their brothers and parents, if Alexander should fetch a wife out of Greece. Troilus, who was the youngest, but no less brave than Hector, urged them on to war, bidding them have no fear of the words of Helenus. And so it pleased all of them to have a fleet made ready and sent to Greece. Priam sent Alexander and Deiphobus into Paeonia to choose them warriors, and he ordered all the people to be gathered together in assembly.

VIII. He admonished his sons to let the older ones command. He pointed out what injuries the Greeks had put upon the Trojans: for this reason he had sent Antenor as a legate into Greece, to gain satisfaction for the Trojans and the restitution of his sister Hesione. But Antenor had been shamefully entreated of them, nor could he obtain aught of them. Wherefore it pleased him to send Alexander into Greece with a navy, to avenge his grandsire's death and the injuries of the Trojans. He bade Antenor tell in what wise he had been treated in Greece. Antenor then urged the Trojans not to draw back in fear, and he made his men more eager to do battle against Greece. To a few of them he told of the things he had done in Greece. Priam said that if it displeased any man to wage this war, he should give voice to his desire. Then Panthus told Priam and his near of kin what he had heard from his father Euphorbus: if Alexander fetched him home a wife from Greece, that would be the final downfall of the Trojans. It was a more pleasing thing, he said, to live out one's life in peace, than to lose one's freedom in combat, and enter into danger. But the people scorned the authority of Panthus: they bade the King say what he wished to have done. Priam said that ships should be made ready to go into Greece: and that the people also would not lack for what was needful. The folk cried out that there would be small delay in carrying out the King's commands. Priam gave them many thanks, and dismissed the assemblage. And anon he sent out men into the forest of Ida, to gather wood for building ships. He sent Hector into Upper Phrygia to prepare an army and have it ready at hand. When Cassandra heard of her father's rede, she began to foretell what would befall the Trojans if Priam should persist in sending forth his vessels to Greece.

IX. But now the time was come; the ships were built. The soldiers that Alexander and Deiphobus had gathered together in Pæonia were come; and when the fleet was

ready, Priam addressed the army: he made Alexander leader over it, and sent along with him Deiphobus, Æneas, and Polydamas. And he bade Alexander seek Castor and Pollux in Sparta, and ask them to give back his sister; this would be sufficient for the Trojans. And if they denied him, he should send direct dispatch to him, so that the army might depart for Greece. Thereupon Alexander sailed to Greece, taking along with him as captain him who had sailed before with Antenor.

Not many days before Alexander came to Greece, and before he reached the island of Cytherea, King Menalaus departed to visit Nestor at Pylos; he passed Alexander on the way, and marvelled whither this royal fleet might be journeying. As they came by each other they looked each upon the other, neither witting where the other went. Castor and Pollux had gone to Clytemnestra, taking with them Hermione their niece, daughter of Helen. In those times the day of Juno was a great feast day among the Argives; at this time Alexander came to the island of Cytherea, where he made sacrifice to Diana in the fane of Venus. Those who dwelt in the island marvelled at the royal fleet, and asked the men who were with Alexander, wherefore they had come. They answered that a legate had been sent by King Priam to see Castor and Pollux.

X. But while Alexander was in the island of Cytherea, it pleased Helen, wife of Menelaus, to go thither. Therefore she proceeded to the shore, where is the fane of Apollo and Diana: here Helen made ready to do divine service. When this was made known to Alexander, he, witting well of his own beauty, commenced to walk about in her sight, being desirous to see her. It was reported to Helen that Alexander, son of King Priam, was come to the town in which she abode. And she also desired to see him. And when the two of them had had sight of each other they both, aflame with their own beauty, took time to make thanksgiving. Alexander gave orders that all men should

be ready in the ships, so that they might set sail by night, carrying off Helen from the fane, and taking her with them. When the sign was given they broke into the temple, carried off Helen unharmed, bore her into the ship, and stole away certain other women along with her. When the citizens saw this they fought a long time with Alexander to prevent the rape of Helen. But Alexander, relying on the number of his men, despoiled the temple, carried off a great many men and put them in his ships as captives, set sail for home, and reached the port of Tenedos, where he consoled the unhappy Helen and sent word to his father of what he had done. When Menelaus heard of this in Pylos, he returned to Sparta with Nestor, and sent some Argives to his brother Agamemnon, to ask him to come thither. Meantime Alexander went to his father and told him the order of events.

XI. Priam rejoiced, for he hoped that the Greeks would now restore his sister Hesione and their Trojan spoils to regain Helen. He cheered the unhappy Helen, and gave her to Alexander as wife. When Cassandra beheld this, she began to prophesy, calling to mind what she had said erewhile; but Priam had her taken away and locked up. When Agamemnon came to Sparta he consoled his brother; and they decided to send out men through all Greece to seek and call together the Greeks, and they decided to declare war on the Trojans. These were the men who came together: Achilles and Patroclus, Euryalus, Tlepolemus, Diomedes. When they were foregathered in Sparta, they determined to avenge the wrongs done by the Trojans, and to prepare an army and a fleet. They put Agamemnon at the head of it as commander and leader. Then they sent out legates to bid all the Greeks assemble at the same time, provided with ships and men, at the port of Athens, whence they would set out for Troy to make good their injuries. Soon thereafter Castor and Pollux, having heard of the rape of their sister Helen, embarked and followed them.

They set sail at Lesbos; and being rapt away in a tempest, were never seen again. It was later said that they had been made gods. The Lesbians sent out boats to seek them, as far as Troy; but finding no trace of them, they made this report at home.

XII. Dares Phrygius, who wrote this history, sayeth that he fought up to the time of the taking of Troy; he saw them during the truce when they had been present in part of the battle. He heard from the Trojans what was the nature and semblance of Castor and Pollux. For they were like to each other, with golden hair, large eyes, and seemly faces; they were graceful and featly figured. Helen was like them, beautiful, simple in spirit, soft-spoken, with fine legs and a tiny mouth, and having a mark between the brows. Priam, King of the Trojans, had a comely face and a gentle voice; he was tall and had an eagle-like body. Hector was fair and curly-haired; he lisped, was cross-eyed and bearded, swift-limbed and venerable in appearance, seemly in behavior, war-like, great-spirited, clement to the citizens, fitting and worthy of love. Deiphobus and Helenus resembled their father but were unlike in character: Deiphobus was bold, but Helenus was gentle, learned, and given to prophecy. Troilus was tall and very handsome, mighty for his age, brave, desirous of valor. Alexander was fair, tall, and brave; he had very beautiful eyes, soft golden hair, a charming mouth and a suave voice; he was swift of foot and eager for power. Æneas was ruddy, four-square, eloquent, affable, strong in council, pious, lovable, with dark laughing eyes. Antenor was tall, graceful, dexterous and cautious; he was swift in motion. Hecuba was large and beautiful, with an eagle-like body and a man's mind; she was just and pious. Andromache was fair and clear-eyed, tall, beautiful, modest, wise, shamefast, gentle of speech. Cassandra was of middle height, round-mouthed, ruddy, bright-eyed; she had knowledge of the future. Polyxena was fair, tall, and beautiful, with a long neck and lovely

eyes, long golden hair, members well-composed, long fingers, straight legs and very fine feet, which surpassed all others in beauty; she was simple in spirit, generous and bountiful.

XIII. Agamemnon was large and had a white body and mighty limbs; he was noble, eloquent, prudent. Menelaus was of medium build, ruddy, handsome, gracious, pleasing. Achilles was great-chested, and had a charming mouth, large and mighty limbs, and well-curled hair; he was most fierce in battle, smiling-faced, generous, and myrtle-haired. Oilean Ajax was four-square, cheerful and brave, with mighty limbs and aquiline body. Telamonian Ajax was strong and clear-voiced; he had black hair and was cruel to the foe. Ulysses was wily, beautiful, smiling; he was of middle height, eloquent and wise. Diomedes was strong, four-square, austere in looks, handsome of body, fierce in war, clamorous, hot-headed, impatient, bold. Nestor was very large and tall and broad, with a hooked nose; he was fair, prudent, and a good councillor. Prothesilaus had a fair body and a comely face; he was swift, confident, audacious. Neoptolemus was large, manly, splenetic, lisping, bent, proud, with a seemly countenance and round eyes. Palamedes was graceful, tall, wise, gentle, large-spirited. Podalirius was heavy, strong, proud, and sad. Machaon was large, brave, sure, prudent, patient, merciful. Meriones was ruddy, of medium height, round-bodied, manly, pertinacious, cruel, impatient. Briseida was tall and beautiful, fair, with soft golden hair, joined eyebrows, lovely eyes, and an evenly proportioned body; she was gentle, affable, modest, simple in spirit, and pious.

XIV. The Greeks, provided with a fleet, assembled at Athens. Agamemnon came from Mycene with 100 ships; Menelaus from Sparta with 60; Arcesilaus and Prothenor from Bœotia with 50; Ascalaphus and Ialmenus from Orchomenus with 30; Epistrophus and Schedius from Phocis with 40; Ajax Telamon brought his brother Teucer from

Salamis, and from Elis he brought Amphimachus, Diores, Thalpius, Polyxenus, and 40 ships. Nestor brought 80 ships from Pylos; Thoas, 40 ships from Aetolia; Oilean Ajax, 37 ships from Locris; Antiphus and Phidippus, 30; Idomenius and Meriones, 80 ships from Crete; Ulysses, 12 ships from Ithaca; Eumelus, 10 ships from Pheris; Protesilaus and Podarces, 40 ships from Phylax; Podalirius and Machaon, son of Æsculapius, 32 ships from Trica; Achilles and Patroclus and the Myrmidons, 50 ships from Phthia; Tlepolemus, 9 ships from Rhodes; Eurypylus, 40 ships from Orchomenus; Antiphus and Amphimachus, 12 ships from Elis; Polypoetes and Leonteus, 40 ships from Larissa; Diomedes, Euryalus, and Sthenelus, 80 ships from Argos; Philoctetes, 7 from Melibœa; Guneus, 21 ships from Cyphus; Prothous, 11 ships from Magnesia; Agapenor, 60 ships from Arcadia; Mnestheus, 50 ships from Athens. These were the leaders of the Greeks, 47 in number, who brought with them 1202 ships.

XV. After they had come together in Athens, Agamemnon called the chiefs into council and exhorted them to make good their injuries as soon as might be. He asked if this were their will, and urged them to send to Delphi and consult Apollo before they departed; to which all of them agreed. Achilles was given charge of this matter, and he set out with Patroclus.—In the meantime Priam, hearing that his foes had made ready, sent out folk to bring in the neighboring armies, and zealously gathered his warriors at home.—When Achilles reached Delphi he went to the oracle, and he received answer from the shrine that the Greeks would be victors, and would capture Troy after ten years. Achilles did service to the gods as he was bid. At that time Calchas the seer, son of Thestor, had come, sent by the Phrygians in behalf of his people, and he brought gifts to Apollo. And he received answer from the shrine, saying that he should set out with the fleet of Argive warriors against the Trojans, and that he should

spur them on by his knowledge, lest they retire before Troy were taken. After they had gone to the temple, Achilles and Calchas exchanged replies: they enjoyed hospitality together, swore friendship, set out together, and reached Athens. Achilles reported these things in council. The Argives, rejoicing, took Calchas into their midst and made ready to sail. Since tempests held them back there, Calchas declared from augury that they should first return to Aulis and sacrifice to Diana. They set out and reached Aulis. Here Agamemnon placated Diana and then commanded his fellows to release the ships and go on to Troy. Philoctetes, who had gone to Troy with the Argonauts, acted as their guide. Thereafter they landed their fleet near a town which was under Priam's sway, and they captured it; thence they set out with their booty, came to Tenedos, and slew all who were there.

XVI. Agamemnon divided the booty and called a council together. Thence he sent legates to Priam to ask if he would restore Helen and the spoils that Alexander had carried off. Diomedes and Ulysses were chosen legates; they set out to see Priam. While they were obeying this behest, Achilles and Telephus were sent to Mysia to despoil it. They came into the realm of King Teuthras, ravaging; Teuthras arrived with an army, but Achilles put it to flight and wounded him. Telephus protected the King as he lay there with his shield, lest Achilles should slay him, for he called to mind the hospitality that he, the son of Hercules, had received as a boy from King Teuthras, and the friendship that was between them. For they say that when Diomedes was killed, together with his wild strong horses, by Hercules, he had left all his kingdom to Teuthras: and therefore Telephus, Hercules' son, had come to his aid. When Teuthras now realized that he must needs die by this wound, he gave over his kingdom to Telephus while he was still quick, and ordained him king. Then Telephus entombed King Teuthras splendidly.

Achilles urged him to keep this new kingdom of his, for it would be a far greater help to the army if he would support them with supplies from that realm during all the years they were to abide there, than if he were to go to Troy. So Telephus remained behind. Achilles went back to the army at Tenedos with great spoils. He told the affair to Agamemnon: Agamemnon approved and praised him.

XVII. At this time the legates who had been despatched came to Priam: Ulysses reported the words of Agamemnon, and asked that Helen and the booty be restored: let the King be satisfied if they departed in peace. Priam recalled the wrongs done by the Argonauts, the killing of his father, the capture of Troy, and the servitude of his sister Hesione. And when he had sent Antenor to treat of this, he had been shamefully handled by them. He repudiated peace, declared for war, and commanded the legates of the Greeks to be expelled from his territory. The legates returned to camp and told their answer. The affair was debated in council.

XVIII. These were the chieftains who came to the help of Priam with their armies, whose names and provinces we think should be recorded. From Zelia there were Pandarus, Amphion, Adrastus; from Colophonia, Mopsus, Cares, Nastes, Amphimachus; from Lycia, Sarpedon and Glaucus; from Larissa, Hippothous and Copesus; from Ciconia, Euphemus; from Thrace, Pyrus and Acamas; from Mæonia, Antiphus and Mesthles; from Ascania, Ascanius and Phorcys; from Paphlagonia, Pylæmenes; from Ethiopia, Perses and Memnon; from Thrace, Rhesus and Archilochus; from Adrestia, Adrastus and Amphius; from Alizonia, Epistrophus. Over these chieftains and armies, which were being gathered in readiness, Priam placed in command as generals Hector, Deiphobus, Alexander, Troilus, Æneas, Memnon. While Agamemnon was taking council concerning the whole matter, there arrived from

Cormus, Palamedes, son of Nauplius, who excused himself for that he, being ill, could not come to Athens; he came as soon as he could. They thanked him, and asked him to take part in the council.

XIX. Then, since the Argives did not agree to go out against Troy, they debated whether it might be done in secret and at night for the time being; but Palamedes argued and gave reasons why it were better to make a sally by day-light, in order to lure out the army of the foe. And so all agreed, and they put Agamemnon in charge. They sent legates to Mysia and other places to provide supplies for the army: these were Thesides, Demophoon, Athamas, and Anius. Then he called the army together, and gave it praise, commands, and exhortations; he gave them diligent warning to be obedient to what was said. At the given signal they set sail, and the whole fleet proceeded width-wise towards Troy; the Trojans manfully defended the shore. Protesilaus made a sally on the land, slew numbers of the foe, and put them to flight. But Hector came up against him and killed him; he threw the others into confusion and returned thence to the parts where the Trojans were being put to flight. After great slaughter had been done on both sides, Achilles arrived: he sent the whole army fleeing and drove it back to Troy. Night put a stop to the battle; Agamemnon led his men ashore and pitched camp. On the next day Hector brought an army out of the city and drew it up. Agamemnon charged with a great noise; there was a fierce and angry battle; the boldest fell first. Hector slew Patroclus and made ready to despoil him. Merion snatched him from the fighting line to prevent this. Hector pursued Merion and killed him. As he was about to despoil him likewise, Mnestheus arrived to help him and wounded Hector's thigh: yet even with his wound he slew many thousands, and he would have persisted in routing the Achæans, had not Ajax Telamon encountered him; and while they strug-

gled he was aware that he was of his kin, being the son of Hesione, Priam's sister. Wherefore Hector ordered the fire to be removed from the ships, and each gave other gifts, and they parted friends. On the next day the Greeks sought a truce.

XX. Achilles mourned for Patroclus, and the Greeks for their men. Agamemnon buried Prothesilaus with a splendid funeral, and looked after the burial of the others. Achilles made funeral games for Patroclus. During the truce, Palamedes ceased not from hatching treason: he said that Agamemnon was unfitted and unskilled to command the host. He told the army what he had done: he pointed out his sally, the fortifying of the camp, the regulation of the watch, the giving of the pass-word, the measuring out of the weights and pounds, and the drawing up of the army. Since he had done all these things, it was not just, he said, for Agamemnon, who had received the command by the votes of but a few men, to give orders to those who had come after, especially since all of them looked for valor and genius in their leaders. While the Achæans were quarreling back and forth among themselves concerning the command, the battle was reopened after two days. Agamemnon, Achilles, Diomedes, and Menelaus led out the host. There was great slaughter: the bravest fell on both sides. Hector cut asunder the leaders Boetes, Archilochus, and Prothenor; but night concluded the battle. By night Agamemnon called all of them together in council: he urged and exhorted them to go into the battle-line and to pursue Hector especially, who had slain certain of their leaders.

XXI. When morning came, Hector, Æneas, and Alexander led out the army. All of the Achæans advanced. There was great slaughter. Many thousands on both sides were sent down to Orcus. Menelaus undertook to follow Alexander, but he, looking back and seeing him, transfixed the thigh of Menelaus with an arrow. He, distressed by

pain, still ceased not to pursue, and Locrian Ajax with him. When Hector saw these two pressing on after his brother, he came to his aid with Æneas. And Æneas covered him with his shield, and brought him back with him to the city. Night concluded the battle. On the next day Achilles and Diomedes led forth the host. Hector and Æneas opposed them. There was great slaughter. Hector slew Orcomeneus, Palamenes, Epistrophus, Schedius, Elpenor, Dorius, and Polyxenus, all of them very mighty leaders; Æneas slew Amphimachus and Nireus; Achilles slew Euphemus, Hippothous, Pyleus, Austerius; Diomedes slew Xanthippus and Mesthles. When Agamemnon saw that the bravest had fallen, he called in the battle. The Trojans returned to the city well-pleased. Agamemnon, much disturbed, called the chiefs together into council: he exhorted them to fight manfully, nor to desist because a great part of their number had been overcome; he hoped from day to day that an army would arrive out of Mysia.

XXII. On the next day Agamemnon forced the whole army and all the leaders to go out into battle. The Trojans came out against them. There was great slaughter and fierce fighting on both sides; many thousands fell here and there, on the one part and the other, nor was the battle put off, but it went on without break for 80 days. When Agamemnon saw so many thousands fall each day, so that there was no time to bury the dead without interruption, he sent Ulysses and Diomedes as legates to Priam to ask for a three days' truce, so that they could have obsequies for the dead, care for the wounded, repair the ships, make ready the army, and prepare their supplies. Ulysses and Diomedes went on their mission by night; Dolon, from among the Trojans, came upon them. Being questioned why they fared to the city thus armed at night, they said they had been sent as messengers to Priam. When Priam heard that they were come and they

had given voice to their desire, he summoned all the leaders into council. Then he told them that legates were come from Agamemnon, and that they asked a three days' truce. To Hector it seemed suspect that they should ask so much time. Priam asked each man to tell what he thought thereof; and it pleased all of them to grant the three days' truce. During this time the Trojans restored their walls and cared for the wounded, and each man buried his kinsmen with the greatest honor.

XXIII. After three days the time for battle returned. Hector and Troilus led forth the army with Æneas. Agamemnon, Menelaus, Achilles, and Diomedes charged against them. There was great slaughter. In the first line of battle Hector slew the mighty chiefs, Phidippus, Antiphus, and Merion. Achilles struck dead Lycaon and Euphorbus. Many thousands of men of either folk were laid low; the battle lasted 30 days without a break. When Priam saw that many thousands of his men had fallen, he sent messengers to Agamemnon to ask for a truce of six months. And by the voice of his council Agamemnon accorded the truce. The time for battle came, and they fought fiercely for 12 days. Many mighty chieftains fell on both sides, a great number were wounded, and a great number died under care. Agamemnon sent legates to Priam to ask for a truce of three days for the funeral rites of the dead. Priam took counsel and agreed.

XXIV. But then the time for battle came. Andromache, the wife of Hector, had a dream warning her that Hector should not go forth, and when she told him what she had dreamt, he cast aside her words as womanish. The sorrowful Andromache sent word to Priam to forbid the fight to him for that day. Priam bade Helenus and Alexander, Troilus and Æneas and Memnon, to be summoned so that they might go out to battle; and he sent them forth. When Hector heard of this he reproached Andromache greatly and bade her bring out his harness, nor could she in any

wise hold him back. Unhappy Andromache sought with loosened hair, holding up her son Astyanax before Hector's feet, to call him back; but she could not. Then with her woman's lamentation she aroused the city; she ran to Priam in the royal palace, told him what she had beheld in her dream, and that Hector willed to go into the fray, nor could she call him back, although his son had been laid before his knees as suppliant. Priam gave command for all to go forth into battle, but he retained Hector with him. Agamemnon, Diomedes, Achilles, and Locrian Ajax, seeing that Hector came not forth, fought fiercely, and slew many of the Trojan leaders. Hector heard the tumult of the battle, and the sore straits of the Trojans without him, and leaped out into the fray. Anon he slew Eioneus, wounded Iphinous, and killed Leonteus; he transfixed the thigh of Sthenelus with a javelin. When Achilles saw him, and knew he had slain so many of the boldest, he bent his will to bring it about that they should meet. For Achilles took thought and knew that if he killed not Hector, many Greeks would die by his right hand. In the meantime many thousands were being butchered. The battle clashed fiercely. Hector slew Polypoetes, a very brave leader, and as he was beginning to despoil him, Achilles came up. There was a mighty combat, and a clamor went up from the town and from the whole army. Hector wounded the thigh of Achilles. He, feeling the pain, began nevertheless to pursue him, nor did he cease until he killed him. After his death Achilles threw the Trojans into flight and drove them to the city gates. But Memnon stood up against him right manfully, and their combat was fierce: they parted, wounded both. Night interrupted the battle. Achilles returned wounded from it. By night the Trojans made lament for Hector.

XXV. On the next day Troilus led out the Trojans against the army of the Greeks. Agamemnon sought the counsel of his army and urged the request of a two months'

truce that each man might bury his dead. The legates set out to see Priam, and they obtained their desire, receiving a truce of two months. Priam had Hector buried before the gate, according to custom, and instituted funeral games in his honor. During the truce Palamedes ceased not again to complain about the command. And so Agamemnon yielded to the disaffection and said he would gladly do that they might have whom they willed as general. On the following day he called the men into assembly: he said that he would withdraw cheerfully, if they wished, and gladly yield; it was enough for him to have his revenge upon the foe, and he cared not under whom it was done. He bade them tell their will. Palamedes came forward and made show of his gifts. And so the Greeks gave over the command to him. Palamedes thanked the Achæans, accepted the command, and administered it. Achilles censured the change.

XXVI. Meantime, the truce came to an end. Palamedes led out the host, which was armed and prepared; he drew them up and exhorted them. On the other side Deiphobus did the same thing: the Trojans fought fiercely. Sarpedon of Lycia made an impression on the Achæans; he laid low and slew many. Tlepolemus of Rhodes came against him; but after fighting and withstanding long, he fell sore wounded. Perses, son of Admestes, succeeded him and renewed the combat. After fighting long with Sarpedon at close quarters, he was slain. Sarpedon also went back sore. Thus they made battle for several days. There were leaders slain on both sides, but more on Priam's. The Trojans sent messengers who asked for a truce that they might bury their dead and care for the wounded. Palamedes sent Agamemnon as legate to the Thesidæ, Demophon and Athamantes, whom Agamemnon had delegated to supply provisions and to convey the rations received from Telephus at Mysia. When he came there he related the treachery of Palamedes. They took it ill. Agamemnon

said he harbored no resentment, but that it had been done with his consent. Meantime Palamedes got the ships ready, fortified the camp, and surrounded it with towers. The Trojans drilled their army, diligently mended the walls, added a ditch and wall, and made good other things.

XXVII. When the day of the anniversary of Hector's burial was come, Priam and Hecuba and Polyxena and the other Trojans set out for his tomb. Achilles, passing by them, beheld Polyxena; he fixed his mind on her, and began to entertain a vehement passion for her. Thereafter, impelled by love, he commenced to eat up his hateful life with desire, and he was irked that the command had been removed from Agamemnon, and that Palamedes had been put over him. Urged on by love, he sent a very faithful Phrygian slave with messages for Hecuba, and he asked her to yield Polyxena to him as wife: if she did this, he would return home with all his Myrmidons. And when he did this, so would all the others likewise. The slave set out; he came to Hecuba and told what he had been bidden. Hecuba said that she for her part wished it, but only if it pleased her husband Priam. While she discussed the matter with Priam, the slave was ordered to go back; he reported what he had done to Achilles. Priam answered that it might not be: not, indeed, because he deemed the union an unfitting one, but if he did grant her to him, and he withdrew, the others would not; moreover, it was not right to wed his daughter to a foe. Wherefore if he wished that thing to be, perpetual peace must be made, and the army must withdraw, and a treaty must be sworn. If this were done he would gladly give his daughter. And so, when the slave was sent to Hecuba from Achilles, she told him these same matters that she had discussed with Priam; the slave reported them to Achilles; Achilles complained openly that all of Greece and Europe had been summoned for the sake of one only woman, Helen; since then, many thousands of men had perished, and so many perils had come upon

them; their freedom was in jeopardy: wherefore peace should be made, and the army should withdraw. A year went by. Palamedes led out the army and drew it up.

XXVIII. Deiphobus opposed him. Achilles, who was wroth, did not go into battle. Palamedes, availing himself of his chance, made an attack on Deiphobus and slew him: the battle flared up fiercely, and many thousands of men fell on both sides. Palamedes was active in the front ranks: he exhorted them to fight fiercely. Lycian Sarpedon came up against him, and Palamedes slew him. After this deed he moved blithely in the line of battle, but Alexander Paris transfixed his throat with an arrow as he was exulting and boasting. The Phrygians took notice and hurled their spears, and thus Palamedes was killed. When their king was slain, the Argives gave way, the Trojans pursued and attacked the camp; they set fire to the ships, and all together made attack: the Achæans shamefully turned their backs and fled into camp. This was reported to Achilles, but he ignored it. Ajax Telamon made brave defense; then night interrupted the battle. In camp the Argives lamented the wisdom, justice, goodness, and clemency of Palamedes.

XXIX. The Trojans wept for Sarpedon and Deiphobus. Nestor, who was the oldest, called the leaders into council by night, and urged and exhorted them to put a commander over them; and, if it seemed good to them, that the same Agamemnon might be chosen with the least discord. He reminded them likewise that while he had been general, their affairs had progressed favorably, and the army had been content enough; if anyone preferred another, he urged him to say his mind. All of them agreed, and they named Agamemnon to be general over them.— On the next day the Trojans fared gladly into battle-ranks from the town. Agamemnon led out the army to meet them: when battle had been joined, there was flight on both sides. After the greater part of the day was past,

Troilus appeared among the first. He slaughtered and laid waste and set the Argives fleeing into camp. On the next day the Trojans led out their army, and Agamemnon came against them. There was great slaughter, and both armies fought; the battle waxed fierce. Troilus slew many of the Argive leaders. For seven days the battle endured without break. Agamemnon asked for a two months' truce. They gave Palamedes a splendid funeral; and they likewise buried their other chiefs on both sides.

XXX. During the truce Agamemnon sent Nestor, Ulysses, and Diomedes to Achilles, to ask that he go into battle. Achilles refused sadly: he was resolved not to go into battle because he had promised Hecuba to fight less by reason of his great love for Polyxena. He received ill those who came to him, saying that a lasting peace should be made: so many perils had come about because of one woman; their freedom was endangered; the lapse of time engendered despair: he demanded peace and refused to fight. They reported to Agamemnon how it had gone with Achilles, and that he obstinately refused. Agamemnon called the chiefs together into council, and deliberated with the army upon what should be done; he ordered each to say what seemed best to him. Menelaus commenced to urge his brother that the army should rather proceed into battle, nor should he be alarmed, although Achilles refused: he himself would persuade him to go into battle, and Agamemnon need not fear that he would not do it. He reminded them that the Trojans had no other man as brave as Hector. Diomedes and Ulysses began to say that Troilus was a man no less brave than Hector: opposing Menelaus thus, they forbade the continuance of the war. Calchas made response from the augury that they should fight, nor care how greatly the Trojans might surpass them.

XXXI. The time for the battle arrived. Agamemnon, Menelaus, Diomedes, and Ajax led out the army; the Trojans came against them. There was great slaughter and

fierce fighting; each army raged against the other. Troilus wounded Menelaus, slew many, and sent the Argives fleeing to their camp; night put an end to the battle. On the next day Troilus and Alexander led out the army. Against them came the Argives; there was fierce fighting on both sides. Troilus wounded Diomedes: he made an attack on Agamemnon and also wounded his face; he slew the Argives. For a tale of days there was fierce fighting; many thousands of men on both sides were butchered. Agamemnon, seeing that he was losing the greater part of the army every day, nor might its strength suffice, sent a request for a truce of six months. Priam called a council and told of the legation. Troilus said so long a truce should not be granted: rather they should attack and fire the ships. Priam bade each to say how the affair seemed to him. It pleased all to grant what the Argives besought: the truce of six months was then confirmed. Agamemnon looked after the honorable burial of his men; he cared for the wounded Menelaus and Diomedes. The Trojans likewise buried their slain. During the truce Agamemnon went with Nestor, by the voice of the council, to ask Achilles to go into battle. Achilles, heavy of cheer, began to say that he would not betray his word, but rather he complained that peace should be sought; and yet, since he could deny nought to Agamemnon, he said he would send out his soldiers when the time for battle came: he himself was to be held excused for that he abstained from fighting. Agamemnon gave him thanks for this.

XXXII. The time for battle came; the Trojans led out their host. The Argives came against them. Achilles drew up his Myrmidons and sent them all prepared to Agamemnon. There was a great battle, fiercely raging. In the front ranks Troilus slew the Argives and pursued the Myrmidons: he caused them to retreat to camp; he laid many low and wounded many. Telamonian Ajax stood out against him. The Trojans returned to town as victors.

On the next day Agamemnon brought out the army; all the leaders came forth, together with the Myrmidons. On the other side the Trojans blithely went into battle array. When battle was joined both armies fought fiercely for several days; many thousands of men fell on both sides. Troilus pursued the Myrmidons: he laid them low and put them to flight. When Agamemnon saw the greater part of his men slain, he asked for a thirty days' truce to bury them. Priam granted the peace, and each side gave care to the funeral rites of its men.

XXXIII. The time for battle arrived. The Trojans led out their army. On the other side Agamemnon called together all the leaders into battle. The battle once begun, it raged fiercely; there was great slaughter. After the first part of the day was past, Troilus came forth to do battle; he slaughtered and laid men low. With a great clamor the Argives took to flight. When Achilles saw Troilus thus rage and beat upon the Argives, and belabor them and lay them low without cessation, he leaped forth to combat. Anon Troilus received him and dealt him a wound. Achilles returned sore from battle; the fighting continued for six days. On the seventh day, when each army was being pressed to flight from battle, the sorely vexed Achilles, who had not gone into the fight for several days, drew up his Myrmidons. He spoke to them and urged them to press hard on Troilus. After the greater part of the day was passed, Troilus came blithely forth, being mounted. With a great clamor the Argives took to flight. The Myrmidons came up and pressed hard on Troilus, and of their number Troilus slew many. While fierce fighting was going on, the horse of Troilus fell wounded, and threw down Troilus entangled with it. Achilles, coming up swiftly, killed him there, and commenced to drag him out of the battle. And he had done so if Memnon had not snatched him away and given Achilles a wound. Achilles returned from battle sore.

Memnon pursued and pressed upon him with many others. When Achilles looked back on him, he stood his ground; after his wound was cared for he fought a while and slew Memnon with many a blow and himself retired from battle wounded by him. After the leader of the Persians was killed and the army of the Trojans was scattered, the remainder fled into the town and closed the gates; night ended the battle. On the next day Priam sent legates to Agamemnon to ask for a truce; by the voice of his council Agamemnon granted a truce of thirty days. Priam buried Troilus and Memnon with a magnificent funeral, and both sides attended to the burial of the other soldiers.

XXXIV. Hecuba, aggrieved that her two bravest sons, Hector and Troilus, had been slain by Achilles, took council with herself, womanish and rash, for the avenging of her sorrow. She summoned Alexander; she begged and exhorted him to avenge himself and his brothers by laying an ambush for Achilles and slaying him unawares, for he would send to her ere long to ask for Polyxena in marriage, and she would reply to him in the name of Priam that they should establish peace and fellowship between them, and confirm it in the temple of Apollo Thymbræus, before the gate: thither Achilles would come and speak with her; there the ambush should be placed: it was enough for her if he slew him. Since Alexander was bold in spirit, he readily promised to do it. Some of the bravest men were taken out of the army by night and placed in Apollo's fane; they received a sign. Hecuba sent a messenger to Achilles in the name of Priam, as she had said before. Achilles, who loved Polyxena, agreed gladly to come to the temple the next day. And on the following day he went to the place agreed upon, with Antilochus, the son of Nestor; and as he entered into the fane, they leaped out from ambush. They cast weapons on both sides; Alexander Paris urged them on. Achilles, together with Antilochus, made an attack, holding his blade with the right hand, and

having the left arm covered. Achilles slew many of them. Alexander stabbed Antilochus and Achilles with many blows. Thus Achilles lost his life by an ambush, albeit he died manfully; and Alexander had him carried away and cast out to the birds. But Helenus forbade this, reminding them of many things, and he ordered them to be taken out of the temple and surrendered to their fellows. They bore away Achilles and Antilochus into camp. Agamemnon buried Achilles with a splendid funeral, and he asked Priam for a truce to bury him, and there he instituted funeral games for him.

XXXV. Thereafter he called a council and addressed the Argives; it pleased all of them to consult the gods on what was needful to be done. At once they sent out men to make a consultation: they received the answer, that the affair would be ended by the offspring of Achilles. When the messengers brought back this word, Ajax said that forasmuch as Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, remained, it was needful to summon him to the army to avenge his father, and the advice was pleasing to Agamemnon and the rest. The matter was given into the charge of Menelaus, who set out for Scyrus to see the young man's grandfather Lycomedes. He commanded him to despatch his grandson. This Lycomedes gladly granted to the Argives. When the truce was over, Agamemnon led out the army, drew it up, and exhorted it. The Trojans came out against them; the battle began. In the first line Ajax was busied in the midst of a great clamor. Many fell on both sides. With his bow Alexander slew many; he transfixed the naked side of Ajax. Wounded as he was, Ajax commenced to pursue Alexander through the midst of the enemy, nor did he cease until he had laid him low. Ajax was carried back to camp exhausted by his wound; when the arrow was taken out he died at once. Alexander's body was borne into the city. After his death, Diomedes pressed upon the enemy with great vigor. The weary Phrygians fled into their city, pur-

sued by Diomedes up to the town itself. Agamemnon led the army around the city, and all night long he held siege about the wall, and took care that the alternating watches were diligently observed. Next day Priam buried Alexander in the city, and Helen followed him with great lamentation, for that she had been honorably treated by him. Priam and Hecuba regarded her as a daughter, and they diligently took care that she should never scorn the Trojans, nor desire the Argives.

XXXVI. Next day Agamemnon began to draw up the army before the gate, and provoke the Dardanians out to battle. Priam stood firm, fortified the city, and remained quiet until Penthesilea should arrive with the Amazons. Thereafter Penthesilea came, and led out the army against the Argives: there was a mighty battle lasting several days. The Argives were pressed back to their camp. Scarcely might Diomedes resist: else she had laid waste the camp, fired the Argive ships, and destroyed the entire army. When the battle was ended, Agamemnon held his soldiers in camp. Meantime Penthesilea came forth and wasted the Argives daily, and provoked them to battle. By advice of his council Agamemnon fortified the camp and guarded it, and did not go out to fight, until Menelaus should return with Neoptolemus. When Neoptolemus arrived he took the arms of his father, and around his father's tomb he lamented with a great outcry. Penthesilea drew up her ranks as was her wont, and came forward up to the camp of the Argives. Neoptolemus advanced, drew up the Myrmidons, and led them out. Agamemnon drew up the army; the two charged fiercely. Neoptolemus did great slaughter; Penthesilea charged at him, and he bravely withstood in close combat. While they fought thus fiercely for several days, both of them slew many men. Penthesilea wounded Neoptolemus. He, suffering sore, cut down Penthesilea, leader of the Amazons. When this was done he put the whole Trojan army to flight into the city. The

Argives surrounded the wall with their army, so that the Trojans could not come forth.

XXXVII. When the Trojans perceived this, Antenor, Polydamas, and Æneas came to Priam. They parleyed with him to have a council held, to decide what should be done about their fortunes. Priam called the council; they asked for the right of speech; he bade them say what they wished. Antenor called to mind that the princes who were defenders of Troy, Hector and his other sons, together with the stranger princes, had been slain; that great and very mighty men still survived on the opposing side, Agamemnon, to wit, and Menelaus and Neoptolemus, who was not less bold than his father had been; Ulysses, Nestor, Diomedes, Locrian Ajax, and very many others of the greatest wisdom. On the other hand, the Trojans were shut in and worn down. He urged them to give back Helen and the things that Alexander had taken with her, and to make peace. Amphimachus, son of Priam, rose, a very mighty youth, and with evil words he blamed Antenor and those who agreed with him, and their deeds: he rather urged them to make a sally on the camp until they conquered it or fell conquered themselves for their fatherland. When he had done, Æneas rose up and made reply with slow and gentle words, and strongly urged that peace be sought with the Argives.

XXXVIII. When the speaking was done, Priam spiritedly arose and turned upon Antenor and Æneas with many words: they, he said, had been the authors of the vote for war and for sending legates into Greece, what time Antenor himself had come back thence as legate, and told how he had been shamefully entreated. Æneas too, who had carried off Helen and the booty with Alexander, was to blame for it. Wherefore it was certain in his mind that peace should not be made; and he bade all of them to be ready, when he gave the signal, to make a sally through the gates: death or victory would be assured. After this

he exhorted them with many words and dismissed the council. He took Amphimachus with him into the royal palace and said that he feared that the ones who had been urging peace might betray the town, for there were many of the folk who agreed with them: it was needful to kill them. If this were done, he would defend their fatherland and overcome the Argives. At the same time he asked him to be leal and obedient to him, and ready with his arms: this he could do without being suspect; and on the next day he would do divine service as he was wont, and call them together to a banquet. Then Amphimachus, approving the advice, promised to do this thing, and thus he left him.

XXXIX. On the same day Antenor, Polydamas, Ucalegon, Amphidamas, and Dolon foregathered secretly: they said they marvelled greatly at the obstinacy of the King, who preferred to perish with his country and his fellows, rather than make peace. Antenor said he had discovered what should be done that would profit him and them, if there were good faith amongst them. They all bound themselves to loyalty. Antenor, seeing himself thus bound, sent to Æneas to tell him that their country was to be betrayed, and he had best look out for himself and his people; he said that someone should be sent to Agamemnon about these matters, for that the King had left the council full of wrath because he had urged for peace: he feared that he would enter upon a new plan. And so all of them promised; and anon they sent forth Polydamas, who was one of them, secretly to Agamemnon. Polydamas came unto the Argive camp and met with Agamemnon, to whom he told what his friends willed.

XL. Agamemnon called all the chiefs together secretly, by night, and reported this to them; he bade each man say what seemed best to him. All of them decreed that faith be kept with the traitors. Ulysses and Nestor said they feared to enter in upon this rash act. Neoptolemus made

reply to them. While they thus debated, they decided to ask the watchword of Polydamas, and to send it to Æneas, Anchises and Antenor by Sinon. Sinon set out for Troy. Since the keys of the gate of Amphimachus were not yet given over to its keepers, Sinon gave the sign and was accepted, once the names of Æneas, Anchises and Antenor had been heard. This he told to Agamemnon. Then all of them decided to pledge their faith, and it was sworn by oath that faith would be held with Antenor, Æneas, Ucalegon, Polydamas, Dolon, and all their several wives, children, families and kin, and to the friends that took the oath with them; and that they might hold safe all their goods and sacred things. When this pact had been concluded and made binding with an oath, Polydamas urged them to lead out the army by night to the Scæan gate, where was figured on the outer side the image of a horse's head; there Antenor and Anchises had the garrison by night, and they would open up the gate for the army and make light for them. That would be the sign for the attack, when men were on hand to lead them to the palace.

XLI. When the agreements were confirmed, Polydamas returned to the city; he announced what was done, and told Antenor and Æneas, and the others with whom it had been arranged, to lead all their men to the Scæan gate and open it during the night, to show a light and introduce the army. Antenor and Æneas were ready at the gate by night: they took in Neoptolemus, threw open the gate to the army, made a light, and asked that the protection of flight be given to themselves and their folk. Neoptolemus made an attack; he slew the Trojans and gave pursuit to Priam, whom he cut down before Jove's altar. Hecuba, in flight with Polyxena, came upon Æneas, and to him she confided Polyxena, whom Æneas hid with his father Anchises. Andromache and Cassandra hid themselves within Minerva's fane. All that day the Argives ceased not to pillage and to waste.

XLII. When the light of day came, Agamemnon called all the leaders to the citadel of Minerva: he gave thanks to the gods, praised the army, and commanded that all the spoils be put down in the center, so that he might share them equally among all; at the same time he inquired of the army, whether it pleased them to maintain towards Antenor and Æneas and those that had betrayed their country with them, the faith that they had secretly pledged them. The whole army cried out that they so willed it; wherefore he called them together and gave them their goods. Antenor asked Agamemnon that he be permitted to speak. Agamemnon bade him do so. In the first place Antenor thanked the Greeks, and then he reminded them that Helenus and Cassandra had ever dissuaded their father from war: that Helenus had said that burial should be given to Achilles, and that Helenus also knew all things. By the voice of the council Agamemnon gave Helenus and Cassandra their liberty. Then Helenus began to intercede with Agamemnon for Hecuba and Andromache, reminding him that he had ever been well-beloved of them. Agamemnon took this to the council; they decided to grant them liberty and the restoration of all their goods; also to divide the booty equally, to make sacrifice and vows, and name the day for their returning home. When the day of departure came, great storms arose, and they tarried for the space of several days.

XLIII. Calchas made augury that the Infernal Powers were not satisfied. Neoptolemus called it to mind that Polyxena, for whose sake his father had perished, had not been found within the royal palace. He bade Antenor to be summoned; he ordered him to seek her out and bring her there. He therefore went to Æneas and sought for her most diligently; and that the Argives might speedily depart, he brought Polyxena to Agamemnon after he had found her hidden. Agamemnon gave her over to Neoptolemus, and he smote her down upon the tomb of his father.

Agamemnon, wroth with Æneas because he had concealed her, bade him leave the country with all his folk. Æneas went thence with them on ships, and gave over the country to Antenor. After the departure of Agamemnon, Helen was fetched back to her home after several days with Menelaus, she being dolorous rather than of good cheer. Helenus, together with Hecuba, Andromache, and Cassandra, sought out Chersonesus.

XLIV. Thus much the Phrygian Dares set down with Grecian letters, for he abode with the faction of Antenor. The fighting lasted 10 years, 8 months, and 12 days beside Troy; of the Argives there fell, as the daily events indicate which Dares the Phrygian hath described, 806 thousands of men, up to the betraying of the town. Of the Trojans there fell 278 thousands of men. Æneas set out in the ships in which Alexander went to Greece, twelve in number, and men of every age, about 3300 in all, followed him. Two thousand and five hundred men followed Antenor; and one thousand and two hundred, Andromache and Helenus. Thus far the history of Dares.

THE LEGEND OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

INTRODUCTION TO THE LEGEND OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Although Alexander the Great never became as popular a subject for medieval fiction as did Charlemagne, his career and conquests also formed the center of a flourishing cycle of romances. These tales abound in strange incidents, marvelous descriptions, and fantastic events. It was the journey of Alexander into the East that especially captured the medieval imagination, because even the oldest tradition had adorned this part of his career with all sorts of wonder-tales concerning beasts and monsters, magic plants and precious stones, Amazons and queens and the strange Gymnosophists, who were distinguished (as their name indicates) by the qualities of wisdom and nakedness. The ultimate source of all medieval Alexander romances was this Alexandrine tradition of late antiquity: a mixture of historical reminiscence, folk-lore, and Oriental wonder-tales, all of which circulated under the name of an apocryphal author "Callisthenes." It is known to modern scholars as the narrative of the Pseudo-Callisthenes. This version, which was written in Greek, circulated in the Middle Ages in three Latin translations: one by a certain Julius Valerius (of uncertain date; perhaps the fourth century); one which was an *Epitome* of Valerius, dating from the ninth century; and a third which is here retranslated into English (omitting Book II), by the Archipresbyter Leo.

Leo was an Italian churchman of the tenth century who, being sent to Byzantium on a commission, made a copy there of a Greek manuscript of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, and upon his return presented it to his patroness the Duchess of Naples. Later he himself made a translation of it into Latin. His preface, in which he tells these things, is, therefore, particularly interesting as a document concerning the state of letters in tenth century Italy. His mistranslations and misunderstandings of the Greek text are also instructive. Most of the earlier vernacular treatments of Alexander used Valerius rather than Leo, but later Leo's

translation was sometimes employed as a source in conjunction with that of Valerius.

Some of the most famous of the medieval treatments which derive, more or less directly, from the ultimate tradition of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, are: the *Alexandre* of Auberic de Besançon, of the early twelfth century, which uses sober history as well as the more fabulous account of Valerius; the *Alexanderlied* of Lamprecht, a translation of Auberic, but using Leo as well; a long French romance in dodecasyllabic lines (whence the Alexandrine line gets its name); two poems on *La Vengeance de la Mort d'Alexandre* by Gui de Cambrai and Jean de Névelois respectively; and the *Roman de Toute Chevalerie* attributed to Thomas or Eustace of Kent (the literary quality of this last poem is not high; but the manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris is notable for its lively drawings of the strange creatures encountered by Alexander in the East). In conjunction with Leo's version the student would do well to read the Middle English alliterative *Wars of Alexander,* or the amusing alliterative account of Alexander's disputation with the wise King Dindamus (both published by the Early English Text Society). Both are well told; and the latter contains some of the most crushing arguments ever employed by a pacifist philosopher against a triumphant general.

The text used for this translation was edited by Friedrich Pfister, Heidelberg, 1913.

PROLOGUE

1. Good it is and useful for all Christian men, prelates as well as vassals, secular as well as spiritual, to hear and learn of the fights and victories of the most eminent of the heathen folk, albeit pagan, who lived before Christ's coming, for it spurreth all to nobler deeds. For the prelates, who are eke guides, by reading and meditating how the aforementioned pagans, idolaters though they were, bore themselves above reproach in all they did, may thus sharpen their minds by that example, with the resolve that they be known as leal members of Christ, and greatly outdo those others in chastity, righteousness, and piety. And vassals also, those who owe the service of their arms, reading or hearing of such combats and compaigns of their fellow soldiers, who warred in truth rather against demons than God, may strive to prove themselves more prudent in all good works than these, as doth befit the soldiers of Christ. For they must serve their lords in the flesh in purity and faith, according to the apostle's precept; but God their Creator they must serve by maintaining his commandments, doing violence to none and robbing none, but finding abundance in his substance, as the blessed John, Baptist and Forerunner of Christ, laid down in his evangel, lest—God forfend!—by waging earthly war they be cut off from heavenly chivalry. And let spiritual men also hear what battles and what good works were done by pagan men for love of this world, from the very beginning down to the coming of Christ, and let them sorrow to reflect what wise and pious men were held then in the devil's thrall, by the blindness of their souls, lest they might know their Maker, and cease to worship His creation rather than

the Creator's Self; and how just and necessary, then, for human kind was the coming of Christ, for according to Holy Scripture, if our Redeemer had not visited us from on high to show us the way of salvation by which we may be saved by adoring Him in the Trinity and by recognizing in Him the Creator of all things, we should have perished root and branch in all eternity. Wherefore with pure mind let us cry out with the apostle in admiration: *"O altitudo sapientiae et scientiae dei, quam incomprehensibilia sunt indicia eius et investigabiles viae eius."* And again let us exclaim, asking with the psalmist: *"Quis loquiter potentias domini et auditas faciet omnes laudes eius?"* Thou shalt hear the answer: None.

2. Now it fell out in the reign of Constantinus and Romanus, mighty Emperors of Christendom, in the time when John and Marinus, excellent rulers, held the principality of the dukedom of all Campania, that these latter had need to send a messenger to the aforementioned Emperors in Constantinople, and so they sent thither their very faithful Archipresbyter, Leo. He, having arrived in the same city of Constantinople, began to look about him for books to read. Among these he found a history containing the battles and victories of Alexander, King of Macedon. And lacking quite the vices of negligence and sloth, he wrote it down without delay and took it along with him to Naples, to his aforementioned most excellent masters and to the illustrious and most blessed wife of one of them, the noble Theodora of Roman senatorial rank, who was used to meditate upon the Holy Scripture day and night. And she was eke an untiring protector of widows and orphans and divers strangers. And in still youthful years she closed the course of this life at the age of thirty-eight, and went home to the Lord. After her death the aforementioned John, the most excellent duke and consul, her husband, a man right pleasing to God, determined to look into the order of his written books and

have them clearly ranged. First in truth he had renewed and made better the books that he had found during his reign; then he made inquiry like a philosopher wherever he might hear of others or obtain them, and by request and prayer he heaped together divers books and commanded them to be written down. Chiefly he revived and put together churchly books, the Old and New Testaments, completely done. Among them he made place for history and chronicle, Josephus and Titus Livius and Dionysius, the preacher of celestial virtues, and very many other doctors which it seemeth us too long to number here. And at the same time this most sagacious duke and consul, remembering that the said Leo owned the book before described, which was the history of King Alexander, had him summoned, and commanded that it be turned from Greek into Latin, the which was then done, as the following pages show; thus yielding merit for the salvation of his soul and the memory of his name from all who labor either as doctors or as writers.

THE NATIVITY AND THE CONQUESTS OF KING ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Book I

1. The wisest men of the Egyptians, computing the measurement of the earth and the ruling waves of the sea and the order of the celestial stars, have handed down for the whole world the depth of their lore in magic powers. They tell moreover of Nectanebus, whose enemies came upon him suddenly like clouds; against these he did not move his soldiery nor arms nor instruments of steel, but he went into the palace and took a copper shell; and putting in it some rain water, and holding in his hand an ebony staff, he called upon the demons by his magic arts, and by his incantations he saw and knew within that shell the fleets that were about to come upon him.

2. For there were spies in the region of Romania; a certain one of these came to him and said: "Great Nectanebus, a mighty multitude of tens of thousands of enemies descends upon you. There are Scythians and Conians; Ibires and Stidi; Arabs, Oxidrakes, Lampasidri, Lisanii, Bosphori, Arghi, Chaldeans; Sarbii, and Agriophagi: the numberless mighty peoples of the Orient." When this was spoken, Nectanebus, the prince of the army, smiled and said: "Watch well and vigilantly over the custody which I entrust to thee; but thou hast given answer not as a soldier, but as a fearsome man. For strength showeth not in a multitude of people, but in their readiness. Or didst thou not know that one lion giveth chase to many stags?"

3. Saying this, he turned into the palace again, and commanded all to leave it. But he alone took up a shell full

of water and put on it a little fleet of wax; and holding with his hand a staff of palm, he began to make incantations with all his strength and to gaze within the shell: he saw that the Egyptian gods were piloting the ships of the barbarians. Anon he shaved his head and beard, in order to disguise himself; he bore with him all the gold he could, and fled from Egypt by Pelusium, putting on linen vestments like an Egyptian prophet and astrologer; and he came to Macedonia, where he sat in a public place making divination for those who came to him. But when the Egyptians saw that Nectanebus could not be found, they sought their god Ifestus and asked him to make known to them the fate of the Egyptian King. He, however, answered: "By flight he hath slipped away from Egypt; after a time a youth will come, casting old age from him, to make himself this world's defense against all foes, and he will receive you as his subjects." Having heard this oracle, the Egyptians had it written down and carved in marble to remember it.

4. While Nectanebus was tarrying in Macedonia, Philip went away to war. After this Nectanebus went to the palace and saw the beauty of Olympiadis; his heart was lifted with desire of her; he stretched his hand to her and said to her in salutation: "Hail, Queen of the Macedonians," scorning to name her mistress over him. And Olympiadis replied: "Hail, good master! Come nearer and be seated." When he had taken place, Olympiadis asked: "Is it true, thou art an Egyptian?" Nectanebus answered her: "Thou hast spoken a word befitting royalty and beauty. There are indeed sages who have interpreted dreams, solved the meaning of signs, and understood flying things; knowing secrets, divining those revealed, foretelling the fate of infants newly born. And I have knowledge of all of them by a most subtle sense, as a prophet and divinator." Saying this, he looked upon her in loving wise. "O prophet," asked Olympiadis, "what

dost thou meditate, gazing upon me so?" Nectanebus replied, "I call to mind a very fair oracle; and in sooth I have been heard by gods near at hand, since I am let look upon a queen."

He took from his bosom a wonderful tablet, which no speech could ever describe, it being made of ivory and of gold and silver mixed, and containing certain circles. The first circle held ten intelligences, the second had the twelve wild beasts, the middle circle had the sun and moon. After this he opened an ivory box and took from it seven very lucid stars, the examiners of the hours, wrought from eight stones, with the which he composed a man's figure. And Olympiadis said to him, "If thou wish that I believe thee, tell me the year, the day, and the hour of the King's nativity." Thereupon Nectanebus began to compute the nativity of the King, saying to the Queen, "What, O Queen, dost thou wish to hear?" And she replied, "Tell me what will come to pass between me and Philip, for it is said that when he returns from battle, he will cast me forth and take another spouse." And he: "False are those words, not truthful; and yet it shall be so after a time." And she, "I beg thee: tell me all the truth!" He answered, "One of the most potent of the gods will lie with thee and give thee aid." And she asked, "Who is this god who will be with me?" Nectanebus replied: "He is Ammon, giver of riches." "And what figure hath he?" "Neither as youth nor as graybeard, but in mid-age he seems, having on his brow a ram's horns, with ornate beard and graying hair. And if it please thee, be prepared for him, for thou shalt see him in a dream, and in sleep will he lie with thee." And she said to him: "If I see this, I shall adore thee as a god, not merely as prophet or as augur."

5. Thus saying Nectanebus went forth anon into the desert and pulled up herbs; and by grinding them he drew forth the juice; and he made an incantation for the dream of Olympiadis, that she might verily see the God Ammon

in her sleep lying with her. And so it happened. After he had arisen from her the god said to her: "Woman, thou hast conceived thy defender."

6. On the next day when she arose from her bed she caused Nectanebus to come to her and she told him of her dream. But he replied: "I know all this; let us take judgment, for a dream is one thing, but the truth another. When the god himself comes, he will have the likeness of a dragon, and later human shape resembling mine." To this Olympiadis said: "Thou hast well spoken, prophet. Take thou this chamber as thine own; and, if I truly see this sight, I shall hold thee almost as the father of the child!"

7. When it was finished, after he had risen from her, he struck her womb and said: "This fruit shall be victorious, and never know defeat." And when her womb grew big, she summoned Nectanebus and said to him: "Prophet, what will Philip do if he returns?" To whom Nectanebus said: "Fear not: I shall come to thine aid." Thus was Olympiadis persuaded into adultery with a man as with a god.

8. Meantime he caught an ocean-flying bird to beguile Philip through a dream. And anon it appeared to him that he saw Ammon the god lying with Olympiadis and saying: "Woman, thou has conceived thy defender and his father Philip's," and it was as if he saw his hidden members sealing and having converse with a golden ring. And this same circlet had a stone engraved with a lion's head, the splendor of the sun, and a sword. Having beheld this he arose and called the seer to him, who was to rede his dream to him. And the seer said to him: "Know for certain, Philip, that Olympiadis has conceived not from a man but from a god. For the head of the lion and the sword have this meaning, that he who is to be born of her will go into the Orient, doing battle and conquering many states."

9. Thereafter Philip fought and was victorious and started to return to Macedonia. Olympiadis came out to meet him and she kissed him; Philip regarded her and said: "To what man hast given thyself, Olympiadis? With whom hast sinned? Nay, but thou hast not sinned, since thou hast suffered violation of a god. For I saw all of this in a dream; and so thou must be held blameless."

10. On a certain day Philip was banqueting, and his heart was high with joy. Nectanebus transfigured himself into the shape of a dragon by his magic arts, and with a terrible hissing he passed into the dining hall where Philip ate, to the great terror and perturbation of all the guests; and approaching Olympiadis he put his head into her lap and kissed her. Seeing this, Philip said: "Olympiadis, I tell thee, and all of you who eat here with me: I saw this dragon when I was waging war against the foe."

11. A few days later as Philip sat alone a gentle little bird alighted in his lap and laid an egg there. It fell down from his lap to the earth and was broken: a very tiny serpent came out and turned the egg about; it wanted to enter therein, but before it had laid its head within it, the worm had died. And Philip was sorely troubled by the deed, and he caused his seer to come before him and recited all that he had seen. To whom the seer: "King Philip, a son is to be born to thee who will reign and go about the whole earth conquering all people, and, before he may return to his own land, he will die, while yet of youthful years."

12. The time approached for Olympiadis' travail, and her womb began to suffer; and she called Nectanebus to her; and he began to make his computations, saying: "Lift thyself up a little from thy seat, Olympiadis, for in this hour the sun is wont to commove all the elements."—And a little while afterwards Olympiadis gave birth; and when the boy was brought into the world there was thunder and lightning, and quaking of the earth.

13. When Philip saw these things he said: "O wife, I have thought in my heart that this child should by no means be reared, since he was not begotten of me. But now I know that he is begotten of a god, and I have seen the elements commoved at his birth; therefore let him he reared in memory of this, as if he were a proper son of mine born of another wife, who died; and let his name be Alexander."

His countenance resembled neither father nor yet mother, but he had his very own. The hair of his head was like a lion's, his eyes were not alike, but one was dark and the other was light. His teeth were sharp; his attack was like a fervid lion's; and his face gave token of what he was to be later. So in school, when he sat with fellow students, he fought with them and won.

In those days certain Cappadocian princes brought to Philip a great foal bound at all parts with divers ligatures, for it ate men. Philip gazed upon its beauty and said: "In this horse there is a sign either of good or of evil. Therefore let my men approach and receive this foal and let bars of iron be prepared to hold him in so that thieves and robbers and evil-doers and those who should be eaten by wild beasts, may be consumed by this horse."

14. When Alexander was twelve years old he was instructed along with other knights as if for battle; and Philip, seeing his speed, was well pleased with him and said: "My son, I rejoice in thy gifts and in thy speed; but great is my sorrow that thy countenance no whit resembles mine." When Olympiadis perceived that Philip was heavy about this, she called Nectanebus and said to him: "Gaze and learn what Philip thinks to do with me." And he began his computations, and said: "His thoughts concerning thee are fair. For the sun is turned towards a certain star, separating what he desires from it."

Alexander was there present, and when he heard these things he said, "Father, the stars that thou reckonest there —do they appear in the heavens?" To whom Nectanebus

said, "Yea, my son." And Alexander said: "Might I see them at even-tide?" Nectanebus made reply, "Follow thou me this night into the field, and I shall show them to thee."—Alexander asked, "Father, dost thou know thine own fate?" And Nectanebus answered, "Yea, verily." "A good art is that," said Alexander, "and I desire to know it. And what death shalt thou die?" "I shall die," he said, "at the hand of mine own son."

Speaking thus, Alexander followed him by night outside the city. To him Nectanebus said, "My son, behold the stars, and see how sad is the star of Hercules, but the star of Hermes is gay, and that of Jove shines clear." While he was thus gazing on high Alexander drew near and delivered a blow at him and cast him into the ditch. And he said to him, "Hast thou not deserved this, in thy ignorance of earthly causes? Why didst thou desire to mix thyself with elements of the heavens?" And Nectanebus made answer: "This too I knew, that it must come to pass, nor could I escape it and cause it not to be." "What," said Alexander, "am I then thy son?" To whom Nectanebus, "Thou art my son indeed." When Alexander knew that this man was his father, he hesitated to leave him thus in the ditch, but he lifted him up on his shoulders and carried the body into the palace. When Olympiadis saw it she said, "My son Alexander, what is this?" And he answered, "It is the body of Nectanebus." And she, "Nectanebus was thy father." And he said, "How did thy stupidity cause this?"

15. About this time Philip learnt by oracle who should reign after him and he awaited assurance thereof by means of the horse.[1]

16. Thus Alexander waxed bold and strong.[2]

[1] The Greek original tells fully how the oracle foretold that the man who would ride Bucephalus through the streets was to succeed Philip and conquer the earth.

[2] A mere topical summary of a chapter in the Greek original which Leo has omitted.

17. He went by the place where stood that same unmastered horse, and he saw him shut in by iron bars, and lying before him a heap of human hands and feet which he had left; and Alexander marveled greatly, and put his hand through the bars. Then the steed turned around his head and began to lick his hand and, with his feet bound as they were, he cast himself to earth, and turning his head, looked at Alexander. Understanding the desire of the horse, he opened the bars and gently began to touch his back with his right hand. Anon the horse grew milder still; and as the dog flatters his master, so he flattered Alexander. And thus he mounted him and rode forth upon him. And when Philip had seen him he said, "My son Alexander, I have just beheld all the oracle in thee, for thou shalt be made King after my death."

18. Thus Alexander reached his fifteenth year, and he said to Philip, "Father, if it may be done, give me the right to sit in a chariot." And Philip answered, "Gladly I agree, my son, and I shall give thee a hundred horses and forty times ten thousand pieces of gold; depart with good support." He went forth with his friend Efestius the philosopher carrying with him his equipment, and commanding that they should care for the horses well; and they came thus to the Poloponisia to battle with Nicolaus, King of that province; and when King Nicolaus saw him, he said, "Tell me, who art thou?" And he replied, "I am Alexander, son of Philip." And Nicolaus said, "Whom do you take me for?" Alexander said, "Thou art Nicolaus, King of the Arides." And Alexander quoth, "Let not thy heart be lifted up in pride because thou hast kingly honor. For it is often manifested in human destiny that the great shall be reduced to meanness, and the mean shall become great." To him Nicolaus replied, "Thou hast well said; thou knowest not thyself, for my nature is beyond reproach. But tell me the truth: why didst thou come into these parts?" Alexander made answer: "Retreat before

me, man, for thou hast nought against me, nor I nought against thee." Great was the ire of Nicolaus at this, and he said, "See, what sort of man is this to whom I speak! I swear by the salvation of my father, if I hurl but the force of my spittle in his face, he will die." And he spat upon him and said, "Take this which befits thee, thou whelp; take it, since thou blushest not." But he, containing himself according to the teaching of his birth, replied, "Nicolaus, I swear to thee by my begetting and by the womb of my mother who conceived of a god, that I will conquer thee here by my chariots, and I will subjugate thy country for myself." And then they separated, one from another.

19. After a few days came the day agreed, on which both joined in battle. The trumpets sounded the signal for combat, and with one mind they moved into the fray; all of whom Alexander killed with his own hand. When he had won this battle, the military order crowned him and his horses, and he returned to his father with the victory.

20. And he found that his father Philip had cast forth his mother and was taking unto himself a certain man's daughter named Cleopatra. And Alexander came in as he sat at the nuptial feast and said: "Father, receive from me first the victorious crown of my battle. But when I celebrate the marriage of my mother, uniting her to a royal spouse, thou shalt not be guest at that banquet."

21. But one of those reclining there, whose name was Lisias, spoke: "Philip, a son of yours shall be born of Cleopatra who resembles you." When Alexander heard this, he struck him with the staff he held in his hand, and killed him. Seeing this, Philip waxed wroth and lifted himself up, and at the very onset he fell. Alexander said, "Philip, thou who hast subdued Asia and Europe, why canst not stand on thy own feet?" Thus the marriage was disrupted at that time.

22. And Philip fell ill; and after a few days Alexander went in to see him and said: "Philip, though it be not according to the law that I call thee by thy name, I shall speak to thee not as a son, but as thy friend. Do well by the woman whom thou hast used ill; and be not heavy that I killed Lisias. I have done well, but thou hast done ill in that thou didst aim a blow at me, to smite me with a sword." And Philip wept. And when he saw his father weeping, he left him and went to speak with his mother, to whom he said: "Mother, cherish no ill-will against my father, for although thine own sin has departed, thy fault remains. Well it is that a wife be always subject to her husband." Thus saying, he conducted her to his father.

23. A few days later there came kings sent by the Emperor Darius to Philip, demanding the accustomed tribute. When Alexander saw them he said: "Go and tell Darius that when Philip had no son, a hen used to lay a golden egg for him; but now that the son is born, the hen has become sterile." Thus saying, he dismissed them and sent them back to King Darius.

After this Armenia revolted, and Philip directed Alexander thither with a host, and he conquered them.

24. At that time there was a certain man in Macedonia, very agile, by name Pausanias, who was subject unto Philip. This very man desired Olympiadis, and he made a plot: he gathered some people, and with his followers he went forth against Philip; he turned his back on him and he brandished a spear and smote Philip in the back. But although he was hit, he did not die, but lay in the field half-living. And there was a great uproar, for they thought him dead. So Pausanias, lifted up with boldness, entered his palace and took thence Olympiadis and carried her away.

But at this time Alexander returned from Armenia, and he found a great disturbance in the kingdom. And Olympiadis came forth from an unknown place and began to

call aloud for her son, Alexander, saying: "Where is thy victory, Alexander, where the destiny thou didst receive of the gods, to be triumphant and vindicate me and thy father?" Hearing this Pausanias came forth to see Alexander. But he flourished his sword and smote Pausanias and he died incontinent. And a messenger came to him, saying that Philip, his father, was dying, and he went to him. When Philip saw him he said: "My son Alexander, I die happy, for thou has done vengeance in killing my foe." Thus saying he died; and lamenting his father's death Alexander went away and had him buried.

25.[1] And when he had returned from his father's tomb he sat on his father's throne the next day and said: "O young men of Macedonia, Thracians and Thessalonicans and Lacedemonians and all others, behold and look on Alexander, and let the fear of the barbarians be far from ye. Let this," said he, "be my concern, for I shall subjugate them and put them in service to you. Whoever of you shall desire arms, let him take them from my palace and arm himself for battle; and he who does not, let him arm himself with his own." The elder ones said to him, "King Alexander, our time of life is lodged in age; many years we have fought for thy father, and there is not strength in us to avail for trying deeds. Whence if it please thee, let us give up the service of war which we have waged until now." To this Alexander replied, "Rather would we have you in our army than young men, for the young, confiding in their youth, achieve only death, but the older man does all things with discretion." Thus saying he caused them to consent, and to serve in his army.

29. After this, having gathered together a great army, he went towards Rome. And the chieftains of its army sent him six thousand talents of gold and one hundred and

[1] The chapter-numbers are those of the original though their sequence has been changed by the editor of the Latin text.

nine thousand crowns, begging him to yield them the battle with the Chalcedonians.

30. At this time he entered Italy; and thence crossing the sea he reached Africa. The leaders of the army of Africa asked Alexander that he remove the Roman chieftains from over them. But he reproached the Chalcedonians and said: "I say unto you, Chalcedonians, either fight manfully, or subject yourselves to the power of those who fight."

He departed from Chalcedonia and commanded his soldiers to enter ships with him and go to the island of Pharos, and there he received an oracle from the god Ammon.

31. And when he was going to receive the oracle from the god himself, a stag passed by him, and he commanded his men to shoot at it with arrows. But they could do so in no wise; and he seized a bow and arrow, and he said to them: "Thus ye are to shoot!" And he anon shot him with arrows, and to this day the place is called Sagittarius or Arrow-shooter.

Thence he proceeded and went to the place which is called Tafosiri, in which there were fifteen towns; and they had twelve rivers which flowed in their course to the sea.

33. There were closed gates there, artfully made. Alexander, however, made an offering to the gods, begging them that they give him an oracle concerning everything. And he fell asleep there. And in his dream the god Serapis appeared to him, saying, "Alexander, canst thou move this mountain and carry it?" And Alexander made response, "Where, Master, could I carry it?" And he "Just as this mountain may not be carried from its place, so thy name will not suffer change." And Alexander asked: "Tell me the death I am to die." Serapis answered, "It is with good reason, and to spare him tribulation, that a man should not know the hour of his death. Let there be no surmise in thee, at what time thy infirmity will

seize thee. Thou shalt die in thy youth, after surmounting many evils." When Alexander heard this he waxed sad, and gave order that a town be built, naming it Alexandria.

34. He gave an escort to his soldiers, who were to go to Ascalon and await him there. The Egyptians heard of his approach; they went out to meet him and were subdued, and they carried him back with honor. When he entered Egypt, he saw a kingly statue of black marble, and he said, "Whose is this statue?" And they said, "That is the statue of Nectanebus, King of the Egyptians." And he said to them, "Nectanebus is my father." And he cast himself down and embraced and kissed it.

35. Thence, having joined the army, he went into Syria. The Syrians resisted him manfully; they fought against him and killed his soldiers. But then he moved his host, changed camp, and went to sleep. In his dream he saw himself holding a grape, and he cast it to the earth, and grinding it with his heel he made thereof wine. And when he was aroused from the dream he caused an augur to come and he related it to him. Quoth the augur to him: "This town thou shalt capture, for the wine of the grape doth signify blood; and as thou didst tread on it, so this city shall be subjugated to thy power." So he arose, and gathering the army together he began to fight. And thus fighting he took three cities, and razed them utterly, so that the evils suffered by the Tyrians are remembered to this day.

36. Those who escaped him fled to Persia. The Tyrians, seeking Persia, related to King Darius the boldness of Alexander and his great wisdom. And Darius asked the men about the position and state of Alexander. They showed him a painted image of Alexander; and he scorned him for the smallness of his stature.

And he sent to him a ball and a curved staff and a golden coffer with this letter: "The King of earthly kings, de-

scended of the Sun, he who shines together with the Persian gods, sends greeting to his servant. For I have heard of thee, that thou comest in strife for the sake of empty glory. Therefore I counsel thee, turn thy steps back and go home to thy mother; be at peace in her lap. I have sent thee the ball and curved staff and the golden coffer, that thou mayest exercise thee and meditate upon the reason for the jest. For I know that thou art poor and miserably wanting; but turn thou in haste from this stupidity and from the mad pursuit of glory. For thou hast huddled together some petty robbers, and dost wish to combat with the multitude of the Persians: take thought; canst thou number the stars of Heaven? If thou couldst bring together men from all the world, thou wouldst not have strength to resist the plenitude of the Persians, for they are equal to the sands of the sea. So much gold is lodged in Persia that it puts out the brightness of the sun. Hence it behooves thee to repent thy works; and if thou dost desire to persist in thy foolhardiness I shall send avengers to apprehend thee, not as son of Philip but as chief of robbers I shall give order that thou be crucified."

37. And men brought this letter to him and bade him read it before his soldiers. Hearing it, his men waxed sad. To them Alexander spoke: "O fellow-soldiers, be not disturbed by the words of the letter. Know ye not, the dogs that bark much do little? In like manner let us believe this letter tells the truth. But we have need to fight strongly and boldly with them; and not for nought, for their treasures impel us to fight." When he had said this, he commanded his soldiers to take those men and crucify them. But they said, "What blame was ours?" Alexander replied, "Why say ye that I do evil? And if I do evil, the words of your master compel me to do it, he who sent you to me as if I were a robber." But they said, "Darius wrote them knowing not thy magnificence, and who thou art. And thus we came and saw an Emperor plainly to be rec-

ognized as one; after we go back, thy name shall be exalted."

And he bade them be set free, and invited them to his banquet. Sitting with him and dining, they said to the King, "Lord, if it please thy power, give orders that one thousand soldiers go with us, and we shall betray Darius to thee." Alexander said, "Rejoice for the place in which ye sit, for the one thousand soldiers will not be given you for the betraying of your master."

38. On the next day Alexander sat down again and ordered that a letter be written to Darius saying: "King Alexander, son of Philip and Olympiadis, to Darius King of an earthly realm, near relative of the sun, shining with the Persian gods, I say this thing: It is a shame for an Emperor so resplendent and so magnificent to direct such words to so small a man, and yet to remain in doubt that thou canst suffer at my hands, thou who art relative of the sun, who dost sit on the throne of Mithra and gleam together with the Persian gods. For the immortal gods are wroth if mortal men wish to make themselves their fellows. I myself am mortal and so I come to fight against thee as against a mortal. And as thou didst boast of having great treasures of gold, thou hast sharpened our appetite and strengthened our valor that we may acquire your riches. But thou who are great and exalted, when thou shalt have come to fight with me, and shalt have conquered, thou shalt gain no praise for conquering but a robber. But if I conquer thee, I gain great glory, for I conquer a most magnificent emperor. Since thou hast sent us a curved staff and ball and golden coffer, I understand by the staff that the most potent kings shall be bent before me; by the rounded ball I understand that I shall hold the roundness of all the world; by the golden coffer I understand that I shall have victory and receive a tribute from all, since I, who am so small, received a golden box from thee, who art great."

39. Having written this he called the legates, gave them likewise a golden coffer and letter, and sent them away. When the messengers were gone, Alexander began to make ready for the march. Darius, having received and read the letter, became angered; he sent his satraps a letter in this wise: "Darius, King of the Persians, to our satraps. We have heard that the Macedon Alexander, son of Philip, has been exalted in his foolhardiness and has entered into the land of Asia which is mine, and he has made inroad on it. Wherefore I command you, take him captive and bring him to me, as befits men so great and strong, supporters of my empire, that I may whip him like a boy and put purple on him and send him to his mother Olympiadis in Macedonia, for it is not proper for him to fight, but to stay in his province and play boys' games."

And reading this letter, the satraps wrote back a letter in this manner, "I, Primus, and I, Antilochos, satraps, to Darius King of the Persians: greeting. May your highness know that this same boy Alexander whom ye mention has scattered our province with the host of foes he gathered together; and we fought with him and fled away and barely escaped from his hands. As we have been called supporters of the empire it is needful that we seek to save thee. As you have said he was to put on purple, know that he has completely overthrown Tyre."

40. When Darius had read this letter another messenger came to him saying that Alexander had encamped upon the river which was called Straga. And again he wrote a letter to him in this manner: "I, Darius, King of the Persians, send this letter unto Alexander. In all the world the name of Darius is praised, and even the gods praise his name. How hast thou dared to cross the rivers and sea and mountains and to come against me? Great had been thy fame to have held the empire of Macedonia without me; but thou hast taken heart and gathered thy fellows, and thou comest fighting and overturning states. Better

would it be for thee to repent of thine evil deeds, before thou has received injury of me and hast had to flee to me who am thy lord, lest thou heap up many evils for thyself. But thou shouldst take pride in this and repent of thy sins, for thou hast been considered worthy to receive letters from me.

"And that thou mayest know in truth how great is my army and of what sort, I shall signify it to thee by this poppy-seed which I send thee. Behold therefore, if thou couldst measure it, surely my people could be measured. But if thou canst not do this, go back to thy country and forget what thou hast done, and let not thy heart aspire further to do such deeds."

41A. And when the legates had come to Alexander bearing the letter and the grain of poppy to him, he read it and stretched forth his hand and took from it the seed, putting it into his mouth, and he chewed it and said: "I see that his men are numerous, but they are soft as this grain." There came messengers to him telling of the sickness of Olympiadis his mother. Although he had heard this news, he wrote a letter to King Darius saying: "I, Alexander the King, say this to Darius King of the Persians: Many letters have come to me which compel me, and willy-nilly I do it, to say these things. Do not think that for fear or doubt of the foolishness of your vain glory I shall depart from this place; know of a certainty that I go back to see my mother, not so much to see her sweet bosom as to visit her according to my will, since she is greatly oppressed by illness. But before long time I shall come back renewed. I send thee back again the poppy-seed, chewing it as a sign of the immeasurable number of thine army; and this pepper that thou mayest know that the strength of this little pepper conquers a great multitude of poppy-seed." When the letter was written Alexander called the legates of Darius and gave it to them and dismissed them. And then he went back to his mother.

41B. A very mighty man, the chieftain of the army of King Darius, was stationed at that time over Arabia with a strong band of the enemy. He moved from thence with his whole army. He took his stand opposing Alexander and began to fight fiercely with him, and men died on both sides. And a mighty battle was begun in the morning and was fought until sunset. And on neither side were they weaklings, but they fought manfully for three successive days, and so mighty was that battle that the sun was darkened in sympathy for so great a slaughter, not wishing to see so much blood. And during the encounter Amonta, general of the army of Darius, deserted, and fled with those that survived into Persia.

41C. When they had fled thus speedily they found before Darius the legates who had carried to him the pepper and the letter of Alexander, and Darius was holding in his hand the letter of Alexander. Darius inquired of his emissaries what Alexander had done with the poppy-seed. And they said, "He took it and ground it with his teeth and said in scorn, 'They are many, but weak.' And Darius took the pepper and put it in his mouth, and he chewed it and said with tears: "They are few, but more enduring." Seeing this Amonta said, "Indeed, Lord, Alexander hath few warriors, but they are brave, for he slew many of my men."

But Alexander was not lifted up with elation that he won the battle, and he gave orders to his soldiers to bury the Macedonians and Persians who fell in that same combat.

42. And afterwards he went back with his booty into Greece, and there many cities were subjected unto him, and he added to his army seventeen thousand men. Thence he went up Mount Taurus and came to a city that is called Persepolis, in which abide the nine Muses. Thence he went into Phrygia to a Temple said to be the Sun's, where he made an offering. And thence he went to a river hight Scamander which was five cubits wide, and he said, "Blessed are ye, who have the praise of the learned Homer."

A man stood by him who was named Clitomidis, and he said, "King Alexander, greater praise can we give thee for thy deeds than Homer's, for more wondrous exploits hast thou done than the Trojans of old." Alexander said, "Rather would I be a disciple of Homer than have all the glory of Achilles."

43. And after this, coming into Macedonia, he found his mother becoming whole from her illness, and he rejoiced with her.

And after this he went out of Macedonia and came to a place called Abdira. But the men of that city closed their gates, that he might not enter. Wroth at this, Alexander gave orders that the town be burnt. The men of the city, seeing the fire, said, "We have not closed our gates, O Alexander, in rebellion unto thee, but in fear of Darius, the King of the Persians, lest he hear that we made peace with thee, and send us away and scatter us." Alexander said, "Open your gates according to the custom. I have not come merely to fight with you; but when I have made an end of Darius, King of the Persians, then I shall talk with you also." In fear they agreed and threw open their gates.

44. He went over Bikotia and reached Olinthus and thence Chaldeopolis and came to the river called Xenis. And a great hunger oppressed them; and he sacrificed to the gods and made great provision for his soldiers and filled them. And all the soldiers murmured among themselves saying, "Our horses are lacking." Alexander said to them: "My fellow-soldiers, though your horses be wanting, do ye despair of safety? For if we live, we shall quickly come upon horses, and if we die, we require none. But let us hasten to a place where there may be food for us and for our horses."

45. Thence they went to a place that is called Locrus, where they found much food, and fodder for the animals.

And thence they went to a place that is called Tragachantes, and they found there a temple of Apollo; and he desired to have an oracle there of the virgin Zacora. And she said, "It is not the hour for an oracle." The second time Apollo spoke and said "Iracli." Alexander said, "And is my name Iracli, O prophet? For this has thine oracle perished."

46. Thence he moved his army and came to Thebes and he said to the Thebans: "Give me four hundred armed soldiers to aid me." Anon they shut their gates and spoke to him not at all, but they armed four thousand of their number and climbed up on the wall and held it, and they said, "Alexander, if thou depart not from us, we shall fight with thee." Hearing this Alexander smiled and said, "Very brave soldiers are the Thebans; they shut themselves within their gates, and say they are fighting with me!" And Alexander said, "I shall not depart by any means, but I shall stay and fight against ye, not as brave men and citizens but as rustics, lacking in valor. Every brave man who desireth to fight, cometh into the field, for he doth not shut himself within a city like a girl."

But so speaking he commanded a thousand of his mounted archers to go about the wall and shoot at the burghers of that town. And again he commanded two thousand soldiers to break with hatchets the foundations of the wall and iron staves which Anfionos and Zithu constructed; and he commanded four hundred more to go out with blazing torches and fire the gates of the city; and three thousand more he ordered to break down the wall with missiles. And Alexander went into the city with his hurling machines and his archers. The gates of the city were burned and many folk fell from the wall; some died and others slipped off. Stisichorus the enemy rejoiced as he saw the city being thrown open by the spilling of blood.

A certain man of that country hight Isminea, a musician, sighing to see his fatherland destroyed, and hoping to ac-

complish a great work by the art of music and to soften the spirit of the King, cast himself on the earth at his feet, begging him to have at least a little mercy on the city. Alexander looked on him and said, "Master, now that I have already taken this country and destroyed it, thou hast showed thy art." Isminea replied, "I did so that I might soften thy spirit and turn it towards the sorrow of this city. Even if thou didst justly in destroying this city because it was to blame before thee, know thou also hast done evil to thyself, for thy father was of Thebes, and thou also. Thou shouldst have mercy on thy fatherland." When Alexander heard this he ordered the town wall to be torn from its foundation, and went away.

47. The Thebans who survived this burning went to Delphi to the altar of Apollo and asked him to tell them by divine response whether they should rebuild Thebes or not. There was a prophetess there; she went away and drank Castalian water and made prophecy, saying, "He who shall rebuild this city will gain three victories and thereafter will receive the power to build the city up once more." The Thebans took this oracle. Alexander set forth for Corinth; and the Corinthians asked him to compete with them in chariot-racing, and a great multitude came together for the spectacle. There came up afterwards a great and glorious Theban hight Clitomachus. Alexander said to those who were present at the spectacle: "Who of you will go out to compete in this game?" Clitomachus answered him: "If it please your highness I shall go out with your permission to fight and I shall win!" Alexander said to him, "If you win thrice, you shall be crowned." He competed and he won; after winning two more he received the crown on his head and the crier said to him: "Tell us thy name." Clitomachus said, "It is Cityless." The Emperor saw this and said, "Fortunate and beautiful contestant, why Cityless?" Clitomachus said, "Most mighty Emperor, before thou didst come, I had a city, but

now I have one no longer because of thee." Alexander understood this answer and he said, "I tell thee, crier, to call out and say that he is a Theban and that he shall have the power to rebuild and hold the town."

(Book II relates the war of Alexander against Darius, his conquest of Persia, the death of Darius by treachery, and Alexander's marriage to Roxane, daughter of Darius.)

Book III.

1. And when he had heard that Porus, King of India, had come to the assistance of Darius, he began to march against him into India, passing through a spacious desert country, and he went across a dried-out river and cavernous hills, and he became wearied together with his soldiers, so that all his generals spoke and said: "It is enough that we came to fight as far as Persia; moreover, we have conquered Darius, who formerly took tribute of the Macedonians. What shall we do, seeking out places in India where wild beasts dwell, the while we forget our own country? This Alexander of ours wants to do nought but go about fighting and conquering nations. Let us dismiss him; let him go where he will."

Alexander heard this; he stood before them and said to all of them: "Divide yourselves, the Persians on one side and Macedonians and Greeks on the other." And looking at the Macedonians and Greeks he said, "O my fellow soldiers, Macedonian and Greek, these Persians are against you and me. If ye have thought in your hearts that ye would oppose me, turn back and go to your fatherland. But remember this, that I alone conquered them, and wherever in time to come I do battle with barbarians, I shall conquer them. Again, know ye that when I gave you counsel, your souls were comforted on the eve of battle.

Did I not stand alone before all, and did I not fight alone for all? Did I not go alone to King Darius as a messenger, for your salvation and our country's, and risk myself in many dangers? Now therefore if ye wish to go alone to Macedonia, go; for I shall not go with you, that ye may know it is of no avail for any army to make war without the advice of its king." When Alexander said this the soldiers blushed and begged mercy of him saying; "Our lives be in thy hands; do as thou wilt."

2. And after some days they came into the territory of India, and messengers approached him, bearing a letter from King Porus, which said: "Porus King of the Indi, to the robber Alexander, who getteth cities for himself by brigandage, I give warning: if thou beest mortal man, how canst thou be stronger than a god? Why dost thou strive to persecute men who were worthy to endure suffering? Against weak men lacking valor thou hast fought, and since thou didst conquer them, thou hopest to be victor over all men. I too am victorious, and not only men hearken to me, but also gods. Dionysius of evil fame, as is said, did come to fight in India, but he turned and fled before the Indi, not able to endure their valor. Wherefore, lest disgrace fall upon thee, I counsel thee, return with all speed to thy fatherland, for the Macedonians gave tribute to us before the time of Xerxes. But we have scorned the country forasmuch as it is useless, not pleasing to a king, nor do we find in it anything that might seem pleasing to a king. So every man desires a cause of great scope rather than a small one. Behold, for the third time I exhort thee, return home, and put not thy desire where thou canst not have domination."

This letter came to Alexander; he read it out before all and said, "Fellow-soldiers, again, let not your brave spirit be perturbed by the letters of King Porus. Remember the words of the letters of King Darius, and how proudly and how arrogantly he spoke. I tell you the truth: all barbarians

have a common nature: they are like beasts—the tiger, the pard, and certain others; the beasts also, confiding in their savage strength, are bold, and rarely are they slain by men."

Thus saying Alexander wrote a letter in this wise: "King Alexander to King Porus, greetings. Thou hast sharpened our senses and furnished us with boldness to fight against thee. For thou hast said that nothing good is found in Macedonia and that it is not a fertile country, and that India floweth with all sweetness and good things. Wherefore we fight with all the effort of our spirit to acquire it. As thou hast said that every man desires a cause of great scope rather than a small one, we, who are small, desire to attain the summit of thy magnitude, which the Greeks possess not. Since thy letter said that thou art commander not only over men but over gods also, I am come to fight as with a man and a barbarian who is greatly puffed up, not as with a god, for the whole world might not endure the arms of one god; and not without cause, for if the elements of this atmosphere, thunder and lightning and the plenitude of waters, may not endure the indignation of the gods; how then shall men? Know that thy foolhardy exaltation troubles me not."

3. Porus read this letter and was angered; and having gathered together a multitude of his men, and many of the elephants with which the Indi are accustomed to fight, he went out to meet them. The Macedonians and Persians who were with Alexander, frightened by the preparations and the numbers of the Indi, were greatly troubled, not so much by the multitude of men as of the beasts. Alexander bore statues of gold before him, and wisely taking thought, he put them into a fire to be heated, and he made a receptacle of heated iron to hold them and carry them out before the elephants. The elephants, seeing them, thought them men; and stretching out their trunks according to their custom to take them, they were enflamed by the great

heat; and going back they perished. The others, frightened by this, did not advance to fight against the men. Porus, seeing what had been done with the beasts, was greatly troubled. The Persians made an attack on the Indi with arrows and spears and put them to flight, although there was great slaughter of men on both sides. Alexander, seeing this, was angered; upon the horse Bucephalus he entered the combat and battled manfully, the steed itself helping him not a little. And they fought for twenty days without break.

4. When Alexander saw that his people failed he stood out alone before the foe and spoke to King Porus: "It is not fitting that an Emperor should thus vainly lose his victorious men, but he should show his valor by his own self. Let thy people stand to one side and mine likewise; let us two fight alone and hand to hand. If thou slayest me, let my people be thine; if however thou art defeated by my hand, let thy people be counted mine."

Porus rejoiced to hear this and promised to do so, estimating Alexander's body slightly and trusting in his height; for he, being five cubits tall, looked down on Alexander, who measured only three. So each host went back and stood in order the while these two fought, and the soldiers of Porus made a great shout. Porus, hearing his men's cry, turned his head. Alexander charged at him, and leaping on him with up-drawn feet he smoke him with his sword and ended his life. And Alexander standing thus said to them, "Would ye, unhappy men, fight after the death of your King?" They answered him, "For that we are unwilling to yield our land to you to be despoiled." To them Alexander replied, "Let the fighting cease, and go home free and secure, for ye did not presume to fight our people: it was your King. Then he moved camp and caused Porus to be entombed.

And thence, having gathered great stores, the army went against the Oxydraces. The Oxydraces are not proud,

neither do they fight against any man. They go about naked and are called Gymnosophists. They dwell in caves and have no city nor habitations.

5. When the King of this race had heard of the coming of Alexander he sent him some of their eminent men with letters, thus saying: "We, the perishable Gymnosophists, write to Alexander the man. We have heard that thou art coming upon us. Now if thou comest to fight, thou wilt gain no wealth thereby, for thou wilt find nothing thou canst take away or remove from us; and of that which we have no man may dare to take any part away, except so much as divine providence permits. If thou wouldst fight, fight, for we shall give up none of our simplicity." Alexander read this and sent word to them, saying: "And we likewise come in peace to you." And anon he went in among them and beheld them going about naked and dwelling in hidden caverns and caves. Their sons and wives they kept separate, along with the animals.

6. Alexander questioned one of them: "Have ye no sepulchres?" He showed him his dwelling, and said, "Here where I dwell suffices me." And Alexander said to all of them: "Ask what ye wish and it shall be given to you." And they said: "Give us immortality." Alexander replied: "Since I am mortal, I can not give you immortality." But they said, "And since thou art mortal, why dost thou go about hither and yon, doing so many things of this sort?" He answered, "These causes are ruled by supreme providence alone; we are but ministers doing its will. The sea is not troubled except if the wind comes upon it. I wish to be at peace and withdraw from strife, but the ruler of my senses will not permit it. If we were all of like intelligence, the whole world would be as one field."

[*At this point in one of the manuscripts there is inserted the so-called Commonitorium Palladii, the account of the Brahmins by Dandamis, and the dialogue of Alexander and Dandamis.*]

17. So saying Alexander began to go on, and he was greatly wearied in that march, for there were untraversable places there. He wrote a letter to Aristotle concerning what befell him:

I. Alexander to Aristotle, greetings. It is fitting that we tell thee the marvelous things that befell us. After we had smitten Darius and subjugated Persia, and had begun to go towards the Caspian Gates, we came to a certain river which had in its midst a city made with reeds. There were little boats in that river.

II. There we camped on the third hour of the day. The water of this river was very bitter, like hellebore. Around the city there was a stream measuring almost four stadia. Certain bold youths from our ranks, thirty-seven of them, went into the river naked without swords; and beasts of the river which are called yppopotami came out and they devoured them.

III. Circling the river we arrived higher up on the other side and found a sweet and mellifluous pond. Here we camped and kindled a fire. At the third hour of the night some wild beasts of the forest came out to drink water at that pond. There were scorpions there a cubit in length, white and red mixed. And as we saw them a great terror came upon us, and some of our men died. There came thither lions and rhinosceroses of wonderful magnitude. All these beasts kept coming out of the reeds of the pond. There were among them great wild boars, stronger than lions, having teeth a cubit long. There were pards and tigers and scorpions and elephants and savage men having six hands; and their wives in like manner. Meantime we had great fear, for they came upon us; we cast them off with spears and arrows. We put fire in the woods that the beasts might take to flight.

IV. There came upon us a beast of marvelous size, mightier than the elephant: the odontotyrannus, and it

charged upon us; and we ran about hither and thither comforting the men, that they might help themselves: the beast, charging upon us from another side, slew twenty-six of our men. But some armed soldiers killed it.

V. The next night wolves came out of the sand and crocodiles from the reeds and they ate up the bodies of the dead. There were bats flying about there as great as doves; their teeth were like men's; they gnawed at the men, taking from them their eyes and noses and the fingers of their hands.

VI. We moved on and came to a plain called Actia, and we camped there. At its edge there was a dense forest, and there were in it fruit-trees, which the men of the fields ate: they had the shape of giants and were clad in fells. Coming out at us with long poles they slew some of our men. Seeing our men thus fail in strength we bade our soldiers shout aloud. And when we cried out with mighty voices they were afraid and fled away into the forest, for human voices were not known to them. And we pursued them and killed six hundred and thirty-four of their number; of our men one hundred and twenty-seven fell. We remained there three days eating of the fruit of the trees.

VII. Thence we came to a certain river in which was a very wealthy city. At the ninth hour a huge man of the fields came upon us hairy as a boar. I commanded my soldiers to seize him. When they attacked him he neither feared nor fled, but stood his ground boldly. I ordered a girl to be brought and stripped and sent out towards him. And he, just as he was making a charge, grasped her and remained still at one side. We ran up, to take her from him; he bellowed like a wild beast and we took him captive with the greatest difficulty. I had him bound and put to death by fire.

VIII. Again we moved away and came to another field where trees came out and grew from the first hour of the

day to the sixth. But from the sixth hour to sunset they descended beneath the earth. These trees bore fragrant fruit. I commanded some of my men to collect some of the liquor of these trees. But as they went up closer, there came out demons who lashed them. We heard a voice uplifted from the heavens which forbade anyone to take aught from the trees, for, if it were done, we would die. There were there very dainty flying creatures; but if men offered to touch them, fire came out and burnt them.

IX. We came to the territory of Ocean, where are the four points of heaven. In this sea we heard men discoursing the Greek tongue. Some of our soldiers did off their vestments and wished to go into the ocean as far as the island. But beasts rose up which are called carcyni, and apprehended twenty soldiers and submerged them in the depths of the sea.

X. Thence we came to a certain place where there was a tree, the which had neither fruit nor leaves, and a bird sat upon it with bright rays about its head like the sun, and it is called Phœnix.

XI. Thence we came to a mountain, and beneath it was a shore where hung a golden chain, and that mountain had two thousand five hundred steps of sapphire. I went up the mountain with some of my soldiers, and I found there a palace with its threshold and super-threshold and windows and drums and cymbals all of gold, and a bed in it with rich coverings. A gigantic and splendid man was lying on it, gowned in a white robe of Bambyce, adorned with gold and precious stones. I saw also a golden vine bearing fruit of precious stones; I worshipped the man and went down.

XII. Thence I went on for fifteen days continuously and came to a land hight Prasiaca. When the inhabitants of that country knew of our arrival they brought us gifts, skins of fishes having figures like the leopard's skin, and skins of murenæ six cubits in length.

18. There was a city there fortified by a topless mountain and by costly stones. A certain widow held the rule of the kingdom, by name Candace, and she had three sons. I sent a letter to her: "King Alexander to Queen Candace, greetings. I send thee a shrine and statue of Ammon, that thou mayest come and we may go into the mountains and make offering to him." She wrote back to me: "Candace, Queen of Meroe, to King Alexander, greetings. It was revealed to thee by Ammon, thy god, that thou shouldst go and fight Egypt; it was granted thee by the gods. For we have clear and lucid spirits, more than those that are with thee. I send thee one hundred golden *vipedes* and one hundred Ethiopian children, and two hundred intelligible parrots and two hundred sphinxes; and to thy god Ammon I send a crown of precious stones, *videlicet* of emeralds and pearls, together with ten chains of precious stones. And we have sent thee ten golden birds called *cluviæ;* thirty golden chests and five hundred and fifty elephants, eighty rhinosceroses, three thousand panthers; four hundred skins of leopards; one thousand five hundred carriers of ebony. And send thou a reply to us, telling if thou hast conquered *all* the world."

19. Among her emissaries she sent a skilled artist to study his countenance and paint it, and take the likeness to her. And it was so done. One of the sons of Queen Candace, hight Candaulis, went to the tent of Alexander with a few horsemen. But the guards who watched over the army seized him and took him to Ptolemy, who was second in command to Alexander. Ptolemy asked: "Who are you?" And he, "I am the son of Queen Candace." He asked, "Why didst thou come hither?" "I went out with my wife to exercise myself with a few horsemen. The King of the Bebrici, knowing the beauty of my wife, came upon me with a mighty band and took away my wife; and since they wished to defend me, he slew many of my soldiers." Ptolemy said, "Wait."

Then, hastening from his tent he went to the tent where the King slept, and awakening him, he told him all that he had heard from the youth. When he had heard it he arose, and taking the diadem off his head he crowned Ptolemy, and said, "Return to thy tent, and sit on the royal seat, and say, I am King Alexander. And command thy man to have Antigones brought to thee; and he will come to me and lead me before thee as thy man. And when I come to thee, tell me all the youth has told thee before him; and ask counsel of me in the person of Antigones, what thou shouldst do." And so it was done. And Alexander said to him, with Candaulis standing by, "Lord, command me, and I shall go by night to that city and set fire to it and cause them by force to give back his wife."

20. And at once Candaulis gave him worship and said, "O wise Antigones, it were best if thou hadst been King Alexander, and not his subject." And so it was done: he went in silence, by night, and burned the city by fire. When the men of the city awoke they cried out, saying, "What is this?" But they replied, "It is Candaulis, with a great host, come to get his wife. If not, ye die all by fire." And the men of the city burst forth, and breaking down the gates of the palace, took out the wife of Candaulis and gave her back to him. Turning about he said to Alexander, "Dearest Antigones, trust me; I promise thee and ask thee to come with me to my mother, who will give thee worthy reward and royal presents." Alexander said, rejoicing, "Let us go to Alexander and do thou ask me of him, and I shall go with thee." He arranged this before hand with Ptolemey, and then Candaulis went and asked for him from Ptolemy. When permission was given he went with him.

21. After they had journeyed on their way Alexander saw high mountains reaching to the clouds and he marveled greatly. And he saw high trees bearing great fruit like the cedar and having also berries of the grape, so large that one man could not carry them. And he saw nuts like melons.

There were dragons in the trees and many monkeys. And after several days we came to the city of Queen Candace.

22. She came out to meet them wearing a crown, and she was tall and very beautiful. Alexander saw that she looked like his mother. Her palace was of the best, and its roof glittered as if it were of gold. Its coverings were adorned with the purest gold; there were drinking vessels there made of precious stones, and we saw ivory tables there; the couches of that palace were made of onyx, and its columns were of ebony. We[1] saw scythed chariots cut in porphyry that looked as if they were running. We saw elephants cut in the same stone as if they were treading men underfoot. Under the palace flowed a river with water as clear as gold. I saw all this and I marveled. I ate that day with the brothers of Candaulis.

On the next day Queen Candace took me by the hand and led me into a chamber made of stones of the color of gold; it glittered within as if the sun shone there. I saw there a couch of unrotting wood which can not be burnt by fire. And I saw there another chamber made of great pieces of wood with wheels, and twenty elephants pulled it. And I said to the Queen: "These things would be worthy of admiration if they were to be found among the Greeks." The Queen was angered, and she said, "Thou speakest the truth, Alexander." And when he heard his name he was afeared. She said, "Why dost thou change countenance now that I call thee Alexander?" He answered, "Lady, my name is Antigones, not Alexander." But she replied, "I shall show thee that thou art Alexander." And she brought him into her chamber and showed him the image. And said, "Dost thou know this image?" Alexander began to tremble and grow pale. She said, "Why dost thou change thy color and become afraid, thou conqueror of all Persia, destroyer of India, ruler of Indi and

[1] The confusion of pronouns is due to confusion of Alexander's letters with the narrative.

Parthians? But now thou art fallen into the hands of Queen Candace without soldiers and without any conflict. Wherefore thou mayest know, Alexander, that the heart of man should not be uplifted with pride however prosperous he be, and let him not think that he will not find another mightier than he who will overcome him."

At this I ground my teeth and turned the other way. But she said, "Why art thou troubled and wroth? Of what avail is thy imperial glory now?" And he, "I am angry because I do not have my sword." And she said, "If thou hadst a sword, what couldst thou do?" And Alexander: "Since I am deceived by my own will, I should first slay thee, and then myself." She answered, "This thou hast spoken like a wise emperor. But be not sad, for as thou didst help and liberate the wife of my son from the hands of her enemies, so I shall come forth and free thee from the hands of the barbarians, that thou be not slain; for if they should know of thy arrival, they would kill thee, as thou didst kill Porus, King of the Indi, for the wife of my younger son is a daughter of Porus."

23. And she went out again holding me by the hand, and she said to her sons, "Candaulis, my son, and Marpissa, my daughter, let us give some good thing to this messenger of Alexander." And her son Carator answered her: "Of a truth, mother, Alexander gave command to have my brother's wife redeemed from the hands of her foes and given back to him; but my wife urges me to slay this Antigones in the stead of Alexander, for that he slew Porus her father, so that Alexander may suffer in requital." Candace said, "What sort of name will be ours if we kill him?" Candaulis answered, "This man saved me and he also returned my wife to me; I have brought him here safe and I shall restore him safe to his own camp." Carator said, "What is this thou speakest? Shall we two die in this place?" And Candaulis answered, "I do not wish it; but I am ready if thou desirest."

Candace, seeing that her sons desired to kill each other, was sore distressed. She took me aside and said, "Alexander, hast thou not some device to keep my sons from slaying each other because of thee?" Alexander replied, "Send me to speak with them." And she sent him. He went and said: "Carator, though thou kill me here, Alexander has many better messengers than I. If thou wilt that I surrender thine enemy to thee, grant my wish, and I swear that I shall bring Alexander hither to this palace." So the brothers were pacified, and they believed this and each promised to give me gifts. Queen Candace summoned me again in secret and said, "I were a happy woman if I might conquer all my enemies." And when they sent me away, they gave me royal gifts; and a crown of adamant, a precious stone called thunder-stone, and a starred robe besides.

24. I departed thence and went into a crypt which Candaulis showed me, saying that the gods ate there. And after I went into this crypt I made an offering to the gods and I entered and saw a mist, and through the mist bright stars and the apparition of idols. I saw some of them reclining, with eyes bright as lanterns. One of them said to me: "Hail, Alexander." And I said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And he replied, "I am Sesonchosis, holder and ruler of earth, making all men my subjects. But my name is not as thine, for in thy name thou shalt build Alexandria. But come deeper in and thou shalt see."

And again I saw a mist, and a certain god sitting on a royal seat, and he said to me: "What is this?" And he added, "I am the nativity of the gods." I said, "I have seen thee in the land of Lybia, and now thou seemest to be here." I said, "O Serapis, tell me, for how many years shall I continue to conquer?" He answered, "This thing that thou askest it is not fitting that any mortal man should know, for if the day of his death were known to a man he would be so sorely troubled that he would die with every

day. Thou shalt build a glorious city which will be famed in the whole world. Though many emperors shall fight against it, none shall have power to harm it. And there thy tomb shall be builded where thy body shall be hidden." He left this place and came to his soldiers and moved his army thence.

25. He came to the Amazons, and sent them this letter: "King Alexander to the Amazons, greetings. We believe that our war with Darius is not unknown to you, and how we fought India and other nations that could not stand against us. Wherefore we write to you, that ye may yield us our due, and that we come not upon you to do you evil, but good."

They replied to this: "The mighty Amazons, stronger than all soldiers, to Alexander, greetings. We have written and sent thee warning, so that thou mayest take thought before coming to us, lest by chance shame befall thee. Know that our habitation is beyond the river in a certain island that the river clips about; and it has neither beginning nor end; and on one side we have a narrow entrance. And we number two hundred and fourteen thousand women dwellers, not defiled of husbands. No men dwell among us, but beyond the river on the other side. Thou wilt find naught to take from us. If thou desirest to know the manner of our living it is this. Each year we celebrate the feast of Jove and Ifestus; we do this for thirty days, and then we go over to our husbands and they make merry with us thirty days. He who wishes to tarry in delight with his wife retains her for the space of a year. If a wife gives birth to a male child the father keeps him; but if a female, the father keeps her until the seventh year and then returns her to the mother. When we come to fight with anyone, we number ten times ten thousand equestrians. Others guard the island, and we go out against our enemies into the very mountains. But our husbands follow up behind us. When we return from a victory our husbands

worship us; and if one of us falls, the survivors inherit. Wherefore it is fitting that we take a stand and fight, making demonstration of our victory to thee. If thou dost win, thou wilt have no praise for conquering women; beware, Emperor, lest this befall thee. We have related our yearly custom to thee. But do thou take thought of what thou shouldst do, and write us what it is, for if thou wilt fight, we shall come out to the mountains to do battle against thee."

26. Alexander read their letter and laughed. He wrote this letter and sent it to them: "We have taken three parts of the world and been victorious over them; yet if we do not fight with you, we are disgraced. But I give you this counsel: if ye wish to perish and lose your land, so that it be no longer inhabited, come out against us into the mountains as ye have said. And if ye do not wish to perish, go into the river and so let us talk together; and let your husbands come likewise and talk. I swear to you by my father and by Hera and Athene, our goddesses, that ye shall suffer no evil of us. Give us whichever choice ye wish. Send us as many horse-riding women as ye wish, and for each woman we shall give five minæ, excepting what we give them otherwise, and after a time we shall send them back to their country. Reflect on this and write to us." And they, taking thought, sent me ten foals and white horses. [Chapter 27 is lost.]

28. Thence I went to the palace of King Xerxes. And we found marvelous chambers in that palace; and there were quails as great as pigeons there; and they spoke to the kings with human tongues, and told them how many years they would live. [Chapter 29 is lost.]

30. And I saw other marvels there which I am writing of to Olympiadis my mother: when I was in Babylon before I had left this world, I saw a woman who gave birth to a son, who was as a man above the middle, but below a beast

down to his feet, resembling a dog; and when the woman had borne this son she wrapped him up and took him to King Alexander, demanding that she might tell him some secret. And he, arising from sleep, ordered her to approach. She said, "Command everyone to go out. I have a secret to reveal to thee." Then she unwrapped the infant and showed it to him. When Alexander saw it he was amazed. And he bade soothsayers come; and he said to one of them, "Tell me, what is this sign?" He spake, sighing, "O King, thy time is approaching for thee to leave this world." Alexander said, "Tell me, in what manner?" He said, "Most mighty king, the mid part of the body, which has the aspect of a man, is thy self; but the part that is turned into a beast is the men who come after thee. Wherefore I weep for all men, for this sign is made for thee." When Alexander heard this he grew sad and said, "O Jupiter, it has been needful that the day of my death might be ended in peace, that I might accomplish what I planned; and as it pleases thee, receive me as the third mortal taken by thee."

31A. His mother had written to him many times about Antipater, and she was distressed. Antipater thought to support his design, and he caused an evil name to be attached to her. For this reason Antipater feared to go to Alexander, and he commanded a witch-man to come to him, asking that he give him a potion. And it was so done. He gave him so strong a potion that no vessel could contain it. He made a little iron box and put it within and gave it to his son Cassander, and sent him to serve Alexander, and he told him to speak with his brother Iolus and arrange in what wise he should give the poison to Alexander to drink. It happened at this time that Alexander struck Iolus on the head without cause. Wherefore the young man himself, driven by resentment, consented to drug him and took over the potion right willingly, so that he might poison the wonderful Alexander, who loved him.

33.[1] But Alexander took counsel of his friends and wrote a letter to Aristotle in this manner: "We bid thee, Aristotle, that thou give us one thousand talents of the royal treasure for the Egyptian priests to take who serve in the temple where my body is to be buried. And as I have taken thought who is to rule over you after my death, let Ptolemy be your governor and the guardian of my body.

"Let my will be not forgotten, for I say and make disposition: If my wife Roxane shall bear a male child of me, let him be your King and give him whatever name pleases you; but if the woman bears a daughter, let the Macedonians choose themselves whatever King they please. Let Arideus son of Philip be King in Arida; let Simeon the Notary be prince of Cappadocia and Paphlagonia, let the Niciots be free to choose their own chief; let Antigones be prince over Licia and Pamphilia and Phrygia; let Cares and Casandro have the land as far as the river called Sol; Antipater, Cilicia; Peithon, Syria the Great; Seleucus, Babylonia; Meleager, Phoenicia and Syria; and Ptolemy, Egypt—let Cleopatra be given him as wife and let him be chief over all the satraps as far as Bactria." But when Alexander wrote this down there were peals of thunder and horrible lightning, and the whole host trembled.

27. Thence they came to a river hight Titan; the men of the country came to meet them bringing him five thousand elephants and one hundred thousand armed chariots.

Aristotle wrote to Alexander: "Aristotle to King Alexander, greetings. I am overcome with astonishment and my whole desire is to find praise to give thee; may the gods Jupiter and Poseidon bear witness, for by special and illustrious reasons thou art worthy of it. Wherefore we give great thanks to the gods who have granted thee such valor and such victories, and because thou hast conquered all, but none might avail to take or conquer thee. We had heard that thou hadst fallen in direst straits in summer and

[1] The chapters are given here as re-arranged by Pfister.

in winter; and as we have said, all thy deeds are worthy of admiration; blessed are the princes who hearken to thee and aid thee; the Scythians and Ethiopians have submitted to thee; but thou art thyself, O King, the equal of the gods."

Thence he went on to Babylonia. The Babylonians came out and gave him great honor. And at once he made offerings to the gods.

27, II, 1. And he wrote this letter to his mother: "To our dear mother Olympiadis, greetings. Thou hast been told what we have done from the beginning until we came to Asia. Thou shalt be told again what we have done beforehand. I have begun to go out from Babylon with all my people united, to the number of one hundred thousand.

2. We came to the columns of Hercules. We found two columns, one of gold and one of silver, twelve cubits in length and two cubits in width. When we bored through them we found them of gold. I regretted that I had perforated them, and I closed their opening and put gold there weighing one thousand five hundred solidi.

3. We moved away and entered a desert: we found chill dark places, so that scarcely could we perceive them within. And thence we journeyed seven days and came to a warm river, and there we found the fair Amazonian women who wore very ugly clothes, carried silver weapons in their hands, and rode horses. Bronze and iron is not to be found there. When we advanced to the river we were unable to cross it, for it was very high and deep, and it was full of reptiles and wild beasts.

4. We went thence to the Red Sea. There was a high mountain there: we climbed it, and it was as if we were in heaven.

5. I considered with my friends how I might build a contrivance by which I could mount the heavens and see if it is the heaven indeed that we behold. I made ready the contrivance on which I could be seated; and I took griffons

and bound them with chains, and I put carriers before them with food for them on the extremity, and they began to mount the sky. But the divine power, overshadowing them, cast them down to earth a ten days' journey away from my army in a level place; yet I sustained no hurt even in the iron gratings. I went up to such a height that the earth appeared as a field beneath me. And the ocean appeared like a dragon turning it about; and with great difficulty I rejoined my soldiers. When my army saw me they acclaimed me with praise.

6. And the thought came into my heart that I might measure the depth of the sea. I caused astrologers and geometers to come and commanded them to make me a vessel in which I could descend into the depth of the sea and examine the marvelous beasts that dwell there. . . . 'Only in this wise: let us make a glazed transparent cask, and let it be bound with chains and controlled by the strongest soldiers.' When I had heard this I commanded it to be done, and so I examined the depths of the sea. I beheld there divers sorts of fishes, of divers colors; and I saw other beasts in the likeness of terrestrial ones, walking on the bottom of the sea like quadrupeds. They came up to me and fled away. And I saw other marvelous things which I could not recount. Farewell, dearest mother."

31B. Iolus, whom we mentioned above, gathered confederates, and they planned to give poison to Alexander, that he drink it and die. When Alexander was sitting at banquet with his generals and men he began to make merry and be jocund beyond his wont. But Iolus, the center of so much evil, considered how he might give the poison to Alexander in his drinking cup, and awaited the time to do it. But he waxed merrier in the midst of the feast and made more and more jests. And while he was talking with his soldiers, suddenly he asked to drink. Iolus, originator of all this evil, handed him the poison, and while he was drinking, he suddenly cried out with a loud voice as if

some one had driven a spear into his liver. For a while he contained himself and endured the anguish; and he arose from the feast and said to his generals and his men: "I ask you, keep your seats, eat and drink and make merry."

32, 1. But they were troubled and they rose from the table and stood without so that they might see him. Alexander wanted to vomit; he asked for a feather to put in his throat that he might vomit. But Iolus found a feather and smeared it with poison, and handed it to him, and he put it in his throat. Wherefore the poison commenced to harass him more and more. While Alexander was tormented by this pain he spent the whole night in sleeplessness. And on the next day, when Alexander realized his affliction and knew that he was in evil case for that his tongue was burning, he caused all his soldiers to come and exhorted them to abide together in peace and weal. But Cassander went about among his men, with whom he had conspired for the destruction of Alexander, comforting them and saying, "Know that it is ill with Alexander." And they waited for Iolus to learn of the death of Alexander.

2. When the night had come he bade all folk to leave his chamber, and Roxane his wife also. And when they had all gone out he commanded one of his servitors to open that part of the palace which was over a descent to the Euphrates River; and no one was present there. In the middle of the night he arose from his bed and put out the light, and, since he could not walk erect, he commenced to go forward on his hands and feet towards the river, so that he might be immersed in it and the current of the river might carry him away. But as he went down to the river he turned his head and saw his wife Roxane following him in great haste. She was watching, and she saw him go out. Coming up to him she cast herself upon him in an embrace and said, "Woe is me, unhappy woman that I am; thou sendest me away, Alexander, and goest out to slay thyself." And he said, "Ah Roxane, I ask thee, let no one

know my end, though thou wast not fitted to have joy with me." Nevertheless she led him back to his couch and said, "If thy end is come, first give orders concerning us."

3. Anon he caused a notary to come and bade him write his testament. He thought in his heart that he would leave the kingdom to Ptolemy, giving Olympiadis his mother to him in marriage, for she was a widow. He went away, and he said to him, "If thou wert to be made King in Alexander's realm what good wouldst thou do for me?" And he said, "I do it," and gave him the sacrament.

4. The death of Alexander was noised abroad throughout the whole world. At once the Macedonians arose and cried out: "Know, we shall slay all of you if ye do not show us our chief." But he heard the uproar in the bed where he was lying, and he asked what it was. And they who were with him said, "All the Macedonians are gathered in arms, and they want to kill us. They cry: Show us our chief." What did Alexander do? He bade his soldiers lift him from his bed and put him in a high lofty place that he might be seen by all. And then he caused all of them to come in before him clad in one vestment alone. They came in by one door and went out by another and each one kissed him the while he breathed heavily. There was mighty weeping and great lamentation in that place, as it were thunder. I believe that not only men wept there, but the sun itself was disconsolate for so great a king. A certain Macedonian, Peleucos by name, stood in simpleness by Alexander's bed and spoke to him: "Alexander, thy father ruled his kingdom well, but who can reckon thy good qualities?" Then Alexander raised himself and was seated. Striking his breast he began to weep bitterly, and he said loudly in the Macedonian tongue: "Alas, Alexander is dying and Macedonia is lessened." Then spoke all the Macedonians who were present: "It were better for us to die with thee, for after thy death the Kingdom of Macedonia will no longer be. Woe to us when thou leavest us." Alexander

said with many sighs and tears: "O Macedonians, your name will not always rule over the barbarians."

34. Then he sent to Athens, to the temple of Apollo, a peplon, which is a golden robe, and a golden seal, and he did likewise to all other temples. He commanded honey to be brought from the Niciote land and gave orders that his body should be anointed with it after his death, and with myrrh of Trocloditia. These two things preserve the bodies of the dead uncorrupted. And when he had died they put him in his chariot and carried him from Babylon to Alexandria. Ptolemy came out before the chariot, lamenting in a loud voice, "O most fortunate Alexander, thou didst not slay so many men in thy life as thou dost now after thy death."

35. He had lived thirty-three years, and he waged war eighteen. For seven years he fought fiercely, and for eight he was quieter, and lived mirthfully and pleasantly, subjugating twenty-seven nations of barbarians. He builded twelve cities in which men still dwell. He was born on the first of the month of Tinbia, he died on the fourth day of the month of Farmuth. His soldiers felt great grief after his death. Such was the life of King Alexander the Great.

These are the cities he built: the first Alexandria, which is called Iprosoritas; the second Alexandria which is called Yepiporum; the third Alexandria, called Yepibucefalon; the fourth Alexandria, called Ycratisti; the fifth Alexandria, called Yaranicon [at Granicus]; the sixth Alexandria, called Scythia; the seventh Alexandria, called by the River Tigris; the eighth Alexandria, called Babylon; the ninth Alexandria, called Near Troad; the tenth Alexandria, called Masatengas; the eleventh Alexandria, called Iproxanthon; the twelfth Alexandria, called the Egyptian.

PIOUS TALES AND MIRACLE STORIES

INTRODUCTION TO PIOUS TALES AND MIRACLE STORIES

Under the general heading of Pious Tales may be grouped a number of stories, not always purporting to record matters of fact or belief, which were told for moral edification without making any necessary claim on faith. For this reason they belong more properly to the realm of fictional literature than do Saints' lives. Pious tales often deal with characters familiar in worldly romance: distressed ladies, chivalrous knights, jealous villains, hermits, foundling princes, and the like. Such is the widespread story (somewhat resembling the legend of St. Eustachius) in which a husband and wife are subjected to all sorts of mishaps by land and sea: robbery, shipwreck, slavery, loss of their children, separation from each other, until their souls have been sufficiently purified by misfortune and they are reunited to each other, presumably in a state of grace. The Middle English version of this tale is called *Sir Isumbras;* there is one in Old French called *Guillaume d' Engleterre.* Elsewhere the action hinges on a miracle, as in the pretty little Middle English tale of *Sir Cleges,* in the well-known story of King Robert of Sicily, in the collection of verse narratives in the *Miracles de Nostre Dame,* and in the two tales given here: *Heinrich the Unfortunate* and *Beatrice.*

The former of these two was written by a German court poet, Hartmann von Aue. No source has been discovered for this legend of a miraculous cure: since the author gives the hero his own surname of von Aue, it is not impossible that it was a family tradition. The situation is not without analogues, from the story of Abraham and Isaac to the romance of *Amis and Amiles;* but it is Hartmann's pity and humanity that make the story superior to the conventional medieval type. He has lavished his greatest care on the character of the little girl who desires to sacrifice herself to cure another. If her wisdom and eloquence and devotion seem precocious to us, it is because we are

accustomed to regard children as a race apart, with a psychology of their own; but we need only think of the popular romance of *Floris and Blanchefleur,* and the mystical poem of *The Pearl,* to be reminded that children in the Middle Ages were looked upon as miniature adults, wise and mature beyond their years. As a matter of fact they did mature very early, because their environment forced them to, and it was expected of them.

The Flemish legend of Beatrice is one of the many that cluster about the name of the Virgin Mary. It is one of the best of its kind, for it is told at sufficient length to make the characters real to us, and it is full of charming touches of natural simplicity, such as the interview of the fugitive nun with her lover under the eglantine. Harold de Wolf Fuller has preserved in his translation the directness and simplicity of the original, and the rugged, somewhat irregular treatment of the verse.

HEINRICH THE UNFORTUNATE

By Hartmann von Aue

This tale was written by a knight
Who followed learning till he might
Become in letters so well skilled
That he could read what books he willed.
Hartmann von Aue was his name,
And he has searched among these same
Old books of his to find some lore
Might make him wiser than before:
To manifest the grace of God
And love of man, this way he trod.
Now he begins the story's course
That comes to him from ancient source,
And written down in ancient books.
For small reward the author looks
To pay him for the travail done;
Unless he ask for prayers won
From those who watch the tale unfold,
In reading it, or when it's told.
Let each who listens say a prayer
For him who wrote the legend; there
Is benefit for man's own weal
To pray for others, prayers that heal.

The tale concerns a noble knight
Of Swabia, who showed aright
The virtues that in very truth
Belong to chivalry and youth.
His praise was heard throughout the land,
And he had friends on every hand,

And treasures too, and noble birth,
And heritage of all the earth
Can give her son; but his high place
Was no whit brighter than the grace
Proceeding from his steadfastness,
His honor, and his fearlessness.
He was more honored for these three
Than for his wealth and ancestry.

All knew how this brave knight was named:
Heinrich von Aue was so famed
Men told abroad how in his heart
He swore an oath to have no part
In falsehood or in cowardice:
Until his death he held to this
Fixed oath; and all the folk might see
His firmness and his loyalty.
And yet he did not scorn the quest
Of worldly honor: him thought best
To earn the praise of others; he
Was image of all courtesy,
Reflecting glass of worldly glee
And diamond of loyalty.
In justice he was even-scaled,
For vassals, shield and harness mailed,
And refuge for the sore assailed.
He helped the folk whose courage failed
And lifted burdens on his back
For charity; and yet no lack
There was in him of gaity:
He sang of love and ladies' fee.
Thus he won praise beyond compare
As handsome knight and debonair.

Lord Heinrich lived and tasted joy
Of worldly life without annoy;
With ownership of all good things
That altitude of station brings;

But soon his worldly pride was thrust,
And all his glory, in the dust.
By mischance he was overcome
As was the proud knight Absalom;
They saw their haughty golden crown
Of this world's sweetness tumble down
Before their feet; no more might it
Be theirs, as sayeth Holy Writ.
And *"Media vita,"* it teaches us
To know besides, *"in morte sumus."*
"We live in death" these words I rede,
Yet think it very life indeed.

The world's apparent steadfastness,
Its show and pride are meaningless,
And have no strength or masterhood.
It is as though a candle stood
And burnt itself to ash for light.
Our frailness overcomes us quite.
Our laughter is bequenched in tears,
Our gladness mixed with gall and fears;
Our flower hopes must wilt, I ween,
When their bright promise looks most green.
And thus Lord Heinrich learned to know
That if man's fortune's great, by so
Much more can God belittle it.
A shameful sorrow God saw fit
To send upon the knight, and he
Was struck with loathly leprosy.
God's scourge was seen on him, and then
He was made outcast from all men,
Those who had sought him eagerly
In other days, now turned to flee,
As chanced to Job in his sore plight
When he was smitten with the blight,
After misfortune's hour had rung,
And left his hall to sit in dung.

And when Lord Heinrich certainly
Perceived how his peers fled; that he
Stood with the world in lonely strife
And hateful exile all his life,
He was cut off in his despair
From Job's humility, for there
Was patience still in Job the Good
When God had tried his fortitude.
He praised the Lord who chose to bring
Upon his head such suffering.
Heinrich, alas, did not do so;
He cried aloud upon his woe.
His heart once high now felt a blight;
His swimming joys sank out of sight.
He had to see his fortunes fall
And see his honey turned to gall.
A crashing sudden thunderstroke
Had interrupted his delight; it broke
Upon his high mid-day, and hylled
With clouds the sky his sun had filled:
His heart was with his honor lost
By fortune's turn, at so great cost.
The day he cursed when he was born
To live in joy, then be forlorn.

Though other comforts now burned dim,
One little hope remained to him:
Men said his sickness might abate
Or even might be cured; his great
Desire and torment drove him thence,
And his physician's eloquence,
To learned men at Montpelière.
But little comfort found he there:
Only intensified despair.

In sorrow he went on: in turn
He sought the wise men of Salerne,
And asked the doctors there to see

If there were any remedy
For his affliction: One replied
And told him that there might betide
A miracle to work his cure:
But rare and strange the means, and sure
Was he the knight must still remain
Without surcease from his great pain.
"How," he cried out, "can this be true?
If there is hope, then I can do
Whatever is required; indeed,
I shall not shirk the task decreed!
Though I must travail sore for this,
I shall not think it done amiss!"
The master said, "If thou suppose
My words lack wit, I shall disclose
The truth about thy malady.
Our lore is medicine, and we
Know the condition of recovery.
But thou hast not sufficiency
Of treasure, nor sufficient wit
To find the means to pay for it.
Though cure there be, it is not thine
Unless God act the leach in time."

And still Sir Heinrich spoke and pled:
"Why leave ye me discomforted?
My former wealth is still the same;
Surely your masterhood's good name
Will not permit that you withhold
Salvation from me; and my gold
Thereto ye will not scorn: your meed
Shall be as great as my great need."
The master spoke: "It would go sore
Against my will if our deep lore
Were bought and sold like merchandise
Or chaffered for with buyers' cries.
Yet I would not abandon thee

If it were so; but not from me
Can boot be found for thy distress:
Alas! my art is valueless.
A maid alone can work the cure
Who would give her consent from pure
Devotion, of her own free will
To die the death for you; until
She gives her heart's blood freely, thou
Must suffer still; and yet I trow
Few people are accustomed to
Give up a life as she must do!"

Then Heinrich knew by certainty
That this condition might not be;
For by no hap might he come by
One who would thus consent to die,
And his last hope was now betrayed
With which his journey had been made:
He was abandoned and bereft
Of that one chance that had been left.
His spirit was so sorely bruised
Life seemed to him a thing abused.
So he went home and made decree
Dividing all his goods as he
Thought best to do before the end.
He gave to every poorer friend
Some of his wealth, and modestly
Gave benefit to strangers: he
Lifted to God his gifts as prayer;
God's house received an equal share.
And so he humbly laid aside
The worldly goods that were his pride:
He gave up all but one estate,
As refuge for his final fate.

When his great tragedy was known
He did not weep his fate alone:
Wherever men had seen him fare,

He was lamented, everywhere—
Even in distant provinces
Where legends told his prowesses.

The man who held that small estate
As vassal's fief, to cultivate,
He was a freeborn husbandman
Who had been spared the regimen
Of lords expecting greater yield
Of tribute than the fertile field
Could well produce. This man was free
To yield the part his husbandry
Had taught him he could best afford:
This tribute satisfied his lord,
Who boldly fought for the defense
Of all his men, in recompense.
To this estate now came the knight,
Unhappy Heinrich: to requite
The kindness of so many years
The vassal gladly paid arrears.
Gladly he took his fallen lord
To be his guest at bed and board,
Nor sorrowed at the suffering
That such a saddened guest would bring.

God had rewarded him in kind,
Giving contentment of the mind,
A quiet house, a loyal wife
To help him, and an ordered life,
And thereto children, who can bless
The life of man with happiness.
One of them was a little maid
Eight summers old; she seldom strayed
From Heinrich's side; *courtoise* was she
And bore herself right graciously.
To gain his favor and to please
Him more, she studied for his ease,
And tended him; so fair she seemed

And well-conducted, you had deemed
Her father were a richer one.

The others rather chose to shun
Lord Heinrich, if they might contrive;
Not so the maid, for she would strive
To find him when she missed him; she
Was solace in his misery.
Her childish heart was set on him
(And yet it was no childish whim);
Gladly she sat at her lord's feet;
There was no negligence of sweet
Devotion; she was always near.
And she to him was no less dear
Than he to her; it was great joy
For him to find a fitting toy
To give her for her childish sport:
He gave her many of the sort.
That children's hearts are quickly won
Was helpful, when he had begun
To pay his court to her and buy
Things to delight the maiden's eye:
A girdle and a little ring,
Hair ribbons, mirror glistening!
She was so home-like at his side
In serving him, he called her bride
And noble consort jestingly.
Right seldom would she let him be
Alone or lonely. In his eyes
She seemed most pure; though with the prize
Of childish pleasure she was blest
Sweetness of soul became her best,
And she did good with kindliness.

And thus Lord Heinrich lived not less
Than three years with the family
While God sent on him misery.
And then, upon a time, it came

To pass that they—the very same
Good man and wife and daughter—sat
At leisure with him; they lamented that
He was so smitten; he was sad
To hear their sorrow, for they had
Great fear his death would harm them sore;
They might lose much they had before
Of goods and honor if a grim
New master should come after him.
They thought of this; the husbandman
Spoke to his lord and thus began:
He asked, "Dear master, a desire
I have, if thou permit it, to inquire:
If in Salerno many men
Are skilled in lore, how is it then
That none of them could give thee rede
To cure this sickness in thy need?
Great marvel of it all have I!"
Poor Heinrich gave a grievous sigh
With pain so bitter at the heart
His speech came brokenly in part:
"I have deserved this shameful blight
Which God hath sent on me by right.
For hadst thou seen in time before
How widely open stood my door
To earthly pleasure, and how no
Man had an answer to his wishes so
Complete as I, then hadst thou seen
How little care I had, I ween,
For Him who gave so much to bless
My fortunes by his graciousness.
My heart was lifted in its pride
As all fools' are, who have relied
On self alone for their estate
And goods and glory till too late.
Thus I, in haughty hardihood,
Was blinded to the gracious good

Received of God, until at last
I had his patience over-past.
The keeper of that open door
Of welfare closed it, and no more
Was I allowed to enter in
Because of my forgetful sin.
And justly on me God hath sent
This cureless ill as punishment.
Evil and good men all must shun
In scorn my presence, for no one
Of them, how evil though he be,
May not look down in scorn on me,
Turning his eyes from me aside,
And drawing far from me in pride.
But thy great faith, my friend, alone
Is greater still; it can atone
For much, that thou hast let me in
And harbored me in peace within,
Nor fled from me; but though I be
Dearer to no one than to thee,
And though my fortune be thine own,
Fear not my death, for I alone
Am utter need and worthlessness.
I was thy lord, but now, unless
Thou pity me, I am as nought.
Because of me ye two have bought
Of God, my friends, eternal life,
Thou, and thy little girl and wife,
For keeping me who suffered so.
Now for the thing that thou wouldst know,
Right gladly will I tell it thee.
I found no master for my fee
In all Salerne who would assume
To save me from my bitter doom.
For this, they said, I had to find
A cure seldcouth and rare in kind.
A maid alone could work this cure

Who would give her consent from pure
Devotion, of her own free will,
To die the death for me; until
She gives her heart's blood freely, I
Must suffer still, for she can buy
Redemption for me by the knife
That cuts her heart; but always life
Is dear to men; they are unlikely to
Give up their lives as she must do.
I must endure until the end
This wretchedness; if God would send
My death right soon I should be glad!"

This story that the father had
Asked him to tell, the little maid
Had hearkened to, for she had stayed
Close at his feet, and she had heard
All he had said, each little word.
Her childish spirit was so sweet
And pure, it seemed most meet
To move in angels' company.
Her lord's tale haunted her till she
And all the others went to sleep.
They slept; but she began to weep
With pity for him as she lay
Stretched by her parents' feet, and they
Were roused at last to hear her moans;
They felt her tears, her gentle groans.

With her lament their slumber broke.
They asked her, after she awoke,
What heaviness had caused this plight,
That she lay weeping in the night.
At first she would not tell her pain
Until her father spoke again
And begged, and also used a threat.
"Alas," she cried, "can we forget
The anguish of Lord Heinrich's lot?

Ye too should weep, for must we not
Forfeit with him a gentle lord,
And honor, and our little hoard
Of riches? No master shall we ever win
To be to us what he has been."

They answered, "Daughter, this is sooth.
But what avail our heartfelt ruth
And sorrow for him? Let it be;
It is as sad for us as thee,
Dear child, but we can not begin
To remedy the harm he's in.
Only God takes him; another one
We would have cursed for what He's done."

And thus they pacified her woe.
Sadly she let the long night go,
And walked in sadness all the day.
She could not put the thought away
No matter what was done and said
Until she lay once more in bed
And men had gone to sleep again.
She pondered on a prayer then
And said it weeping, for she bore
Within her secret soul much more
Pure goodness than another maid
As small as she might have. She prayed
A prayer that no child else would make.
This only thought held her awake
And made her sad throughout the day:
That she desired to give away
Her life to save Lord Heinrich's life.

With knowing this desire her strife
Within was over, she was gay
And light again throughout the day:
But she was troubled by a single fear,
That when her lord should come to hear

This wish of hers, he would lack heart
To grant it her, and on the part
Of both her parents likewise she
Feared that permission would not be
Accorded her, when she revealed
The wish her heart still kept concealed.

So greatly she became oppressed
Her mother saw she was distressed
Once more; her father likewise woke
To hear her cry again, and spoke
To her the second night as he
Had done before: "What aileth thee?
Thou art a very simple child
To let thy heart be so beguiled
With weeping for him that thou still
Must weep, nor ever have thy fill!"
We cannot sleep through all of this!"
So they besought her to dismiss
Her bootless wailing without end
Which could gain nothing, nor amend.
Thus they had hoped to still her cries,
For they remained as yet unwise
In knowledge of the maid's desire.

But she made answer to her sire:
"Since our dear lord has let us know
The cure for what torments him so,
I am prepared to give what he
Required, if ye will suffer me.
I am a maid and I am brave;
I can give all that he might crave.
Rather than watch him dying, I
Should be much happier myself to die."

Her parents were amazed at her:
Heavy and sad their spirits were
To hear her make this speech; her sire

Begged her to forfeit this desire,
And give no promise to her lord
That she could so unwell afford.

"Daughter," he said, "thou art but small;
Too prodigally good in all
The tests wherewith thy soul is tried.
This sacrifice may not betide
In which thou wouldst give up thy breath.
Thou hast not yet, my child, seen death.
If thine allotted hour were near
By nature, and no help were here
To save thee, if thou then couldst bring
The moment to obtain this thing
So urged, I think that thou wouldst choose
To live: life is a precious thing to lose.
So close thy little mouth; no word
About this shall again be heard—
I warn thee, thou shalt know regret."
Thus he had hoped she would forget:
With prayers and with threats he tried
In vain to turn her thoughts aside.
His daughter spoke and answered him:

"My father, this is not mere whim.
Although I am a little child
My understanding 's not beguiled.
For I have heard and have been told
Death is a bitter thing, and cold.
But he who strives to gain great length
Of days, by effort of his strength,
Although he strain to live, and to
Impel his body to go through
Unto the latter age at last—
Still he must die when life is past.
And if besides his soul is lorn,
He had been better left unborn.
I may give God the greater praise

If I can be done with my life days
And yield my body in my youth.
This is the goal I seek. In truth
Ye should not try to hinder me
Who am to live eternally.
We three shall be consorted still,
Ye two and I; it is my will
To shield you from unhappy cares
That might molest you unawares.
This is the service I can do:
The goods and property that you
Are holding now by my lord's will
And shall continue to until
His life is done, are made assured
Only if his disease is cured.
If we permit our lord to die
Ruin will come to us thereby;
But if ye let me win reprieve
For him, I also can retrieve
Your lives as well: the deed must be;
I beg you, gladly suffer me."

Her mother sighed, for she perceived
Her daughter's earnestness; she grieved
And pled with her: "My little one,
Think of the travail I have done,
The sorrows I have had for thee;
Must these be wasted utterly?
I fear that my poor heart must break
At this demand that thou wouldst make.
Temper thy words to us some deal.
Wilt thou so lightly blast the weal
Thou hadst of us, and wilt thou quite
Hold God's commandment in despite?
He hath enjoined and bidden thus:
That thou shouldst love and honor us,
Father and mother over thee

That all thy days on earth may be
Increased, with profit to thy soul.
But thou wouldst here renounce the whole
Of this; thou art intent to give
Thy life, and that by which we live,
For there is left no joy that we
Could know again if we lose thee.
What would be life and proud array,
What would be goods and great display
If there is left thy place to fill?
Thou must not do us so much ill!
Live, daughter, for we hoped to see
Our greatest happiness in thee:
A blossom of our race, a prop
Of our old age. But if thou drop
This task half done, and by thy will
Leave us beside thy grave to fill
The earth on it, thou hast forsworn
The grace of God, and art forlorn.
Thou shalt be lost at our expense.
Let be this hardy eloquence
That we have had to hear from thee,
For our lord's sake, and let it be."

She answered, "Mother, well I know
Thou and my father love me so,
Ye have upreared and cherished me
Through all my days, most tenderly.
Because of you I am the heir
Of living soul and body fair;
Men and women give me praise
And say that in their length of days
They have seen none more fair than I.
This is sufficient reason why
My gratitude is rightly due
To God, but also to you two.
So I am yours, and so I stand

Obedient to your command
As me behooves; but mother, dear,
Though I am thus indebted, hear
And let me give this soul again,
And body, which thou gavest when
I first was born; let them go back
To God, despite the Foe. Alack,
The world's prosperity and gloss
Is nothing to the soul but loss.
Thus far I have escaped the blight
Of worldly joy miscalled delight
That closest neighbor is to hell.
God must be thanked I see so well
How little is the life we live.
I have resolved that I shall give
Myself, untouched by worldliness,
To God; I fear that in the stress
Of later years, the world may slip
Her chains about my feet and grip
My heart with her sweet flattery;
She has charmed others and may me,
And always they have been deceived,
Left broken-hearted and aggrieved.
Even to-morrow is too late
To leave the world: not very great
Is any pleasure in her fee:
Her highest good is misery.
Her dearest gift is aching heart
And bitter need her greatest part.
Her longest life is sudden night.
We have so little certain light,
We only know—now good, now ill,
And ever death that comes at will.
Not goods, nobility, nor meed
Avail in that sharp hour of need:
Beauty, and strength, and gentleness
Of birth, and pride, go down no less

Than villainy and gross untruth.
The life we live and our youth
Are merely dust and spume; our chief
Reliance trembles like a leaf.
The man or woman who would seek
To capture passing smoke and reek,
Who still lifts up desirous eyes
To covet the decaying prize
The earth awards, and does not know
How foul it is, is doomed to go
To hell: he is made blind within,
His soul and body die of sin.
Think of this trust, my mother; see
What falls on you because of me;
And let my father call to mind
(My good is what he wills to find)
How little time is left to us
In any case, though I live thus
A little while for your dear sake.
If I remain and do not take
A husband, when our lord shall die
After a space, ye must come by
Such poverty that ye must give
Me to a husband, lest I live
In so much abject misery
That death had been more good for me
In your eyes: that is the state
Our master's dying must create.
But though he lived, the time would come
That ye must marry me to some
Wealthy and worthy man whom ye
Have chosen: that, ye think, would be
A good thing done; worth living for.
I think I know another lore.
If he is dear, that must mean pain;
If he is loathed, death calls again.
Whatever fortune he may bring

I am reclaimed by suffering,
Learning the manifold distress
That only woman's lore can guess.
Give me, then, the lasting stay
Of good that will not pass away.
Of my own will I freely choose
Another Husbandman who woos
And loves my soul; and if ye give
Me now I may begin to live.
His plow fares well with every spring,
His court is rich in each good thing.
There neither steeds nor cattle die,
Nor ever little children cry.
There it is neither hot nor cold,
And none abiding there grows old.
The aged folk grow ever younger;
And no frost nips them there, nor hunger.
Instead of woe and anguish sore,
There is but gladness, more and more.
I shall seek out that home of grace,
And flee this bleak abiding place
Where fire and hail break through at will,
And the curst enemy lurks still
With whom we wrestle evermore.
The goods that we have labored for
A whole year long, may vanish quite
Between a single day and night.
I shall flee hence before I dree
The loss of all things dear to me.
Ye love me as befits; I would
Your love would not unlove my good.
If ye can only comprehend
My need of this, I ask you, lend
The word that makes me free to go
Where Jesu Christ awaits me; know,
His grace endures and does not fade;
And He on little me has laid

His love as though I were a queen.
Of my desire I do not mean
To fail in what ye wish; by due
Commandment I belong to you
As God has willed; I am in debt
To you for body's life, and yet
I have a faith I owe to me:
I must not break that loyalty.
He who in doing others good
Hath hurt himself more than he should,
Making himself abject to see,
Is lacking in that loyalty.
Gladly I yield my will to you
So far as it is meet and due,
But yet it is my own some deal.
Though ye begrudge my final weal
And weep for me a little space,
Yet I have still my self to face
For what my self is owing me.
I shall depart where I may be
Completely happy. There remain
Other children of your name
Who may console you worthily
And give you joy in place of me.
For no one may prevent me now:
I shall redeem my lord, I vow,
And eke myself; and, mother, since
Thou criest that thy heart must wince
To stand beside my grave new-bared,
Know that from this thou wilt be spared:
When death comes for his willing prey
I shall be very far away.
Within Salerno I must die
And no one will permit you by
To see me there, when death makes free
The four of us from misery.

By death we four shall be set free—
He will redeem none more than me."

When they had heard their child decide
To seek her death thus open-eyed,
Defending sagely her desire
And spurning human rights entire,
They were aware that no child's tongue
Unhelped by Heaven could have sung
That tune so eloquently; they
Surmised that she had talked this way
Because the Holy Ghost had sent
Its rede to make her eloquent:
Even as holy Nicholas, men say,
Received its comfort as he lay
Within the carriage; thus he learned
The lore by which his spirit turned
To God alone in childish trust.
Her parents also saw they must
No longer seek to turn aside
Her purpose as at first they tried.
From God had come the plan she told.
Their bodies waxed with sorrow cold,
They sat dejected on their bed
Forgetting all they would have said.
For very love they could not say
A word persuading her; dismay
Broke down the mother's fortitude.
Thus they both sat and were imbued
With sorrow and with deep hearts' rue,
Until their mourning taught them too
That it might fall out just as well
If they should yield consent, and tell
Her they had granted it, for she
Desired it inconsolably.
Persisting thus they might offend
Their lord and her, and in the end

They would have lost in any case.
They spoke and told her of their grace
They were agreed to what she willed.

So that pure maid's desire was stilled,
And when the day was barely light
She sought the chamber where at night
Her master slept: his play-wife cried:
"Lord, art thou still asleep inside?"
"No, little wife, but I would know
What matter is it makes you go
Abroad so early?" "Sir," she spake,
"Thought of your sickness made me wake."
He said, "My little wife, thou art
A child of very tender heart:
May God reward thy care for me.
There is no help, so let it be."
"Ah, but there may be help indeed
To save thee in thine utter need,
As thou didst tell us yesterday:
That help shall come without delay!
Thou saidst that if a maid would give
Her life to save thee, thou couldst live
And be made whole: pray let me be
The little maid to die for thee."

Her master had no whit approved
Of her desire; yet he was moved
And felt the stinging tears arise
Up to the level of his eyes.
"My little wife," he said, "to die
Is not the easy thing that thy
Desire so lightly hath bethought.
Thy wishing it alone hath brought
Thy tenderness for me more near:
Thy wishing is enough, my dear.
I know thy love and bravery,
Thy goodness and thy purity,

And more than this I do not need.
God will reward thee with His meed
For all thy trust, but this great price
May not be paid by sacrifice
Of thy young life. It were a shame
Forever clinging to my name
In people's mouths, if by abuse
I turned such medicine to use
And suffered passively that it
Were done for me, as thou seest fit.
My consort, thou art but a child
Whose words unseasoned are, and wild:
Whatever children's vision sees
Of good or ill, at once they please
To seek for it and to pursue,
Although it leads to bitter rue.
Yes, little wife, so thou hast done.
And yet I think if anyone
Should offer to require the price
Thou wouldst regret the sacrifice."
Of her intention he besought
That she should take a second thought.
He said, "Thy parents would unwillingly
Give up a daughter like to thee,
Nor would I take so cruelly,
After the good they've done for me.
Whatever, dear one, they see fit
To counsel thee, thou yield to it."
Therewith he lightly laughed, for he
Had little thought that it would be.
Thus he gave answer to the maid.
Her parents afterwards assayed
To speak to him of it again.
"Dear lord," they reasoned with him then,
"Thou hast been prodigal of love
And honor to us, far above
What we deserve, if we should be

More cautious in requiting thee.
Three days already have gone past
Since we agreed to what she asked,
After she told her will to us
And we consented to it thus.
God make thee whole again through her,
For we renounce her wholly, Sir."

Now when the master's little wife
Desired to sacrifice her life
With earnestness quite plain to see,
People lamented wondrously.
And there was great discrepancy
Between the master and those three.
Father and mother wept to know
The way their daughter willed to go.
Heart-sick they were at their child's fate.
The master also felt the weight
Of the child's surpassing loyalty.
He too was seized with sorrow; he
Wept with compassion, almost won
To doubt the thing were better done.
With sorrow also wept the maid
Fearing her wish might be gainsaid
Because he might refuse consent.
Thus heavy-hearted all three went
And were estranged from merriment.

At last Lord Heinrich let them know
He had resolved himself to go,
And gave them many thanks all three
For love and hospitality
That they had shown; the maid was glad
Of heart again, to know he had
Prepared himself once more to go
The pilgrim's way to Salerno.
The maiden's things were soon made prest,
A horse and clothing of the best;

Samite and ermine fur she wore,
The like she never had before,
The fairest raiment that could be
Discovered, garnished wondrously.
But who can ever tell or guess
The anguish and the bitterness
Of pain inflicted on the pair
Who separated from her there?
The mother's suffering was grim,
And great the woe that fell on him
Who was her father: their farewell
Was heavy beyond words to tell,
For they had given their consent
To that same mission that she went
Upon; they did not hope to see
Her evermore, out of death's fee.
But there was comfort for them yet:
God's goodness softened their regret—
God's goodness, that at first impelled
The maid to have her spirit quelled
In death: it was not by intent
Of human will they underwent
This trial: so their hearts were eased
And their distress somewhat appeased.
Else, when their hearts were so much tried,
I think they surely must have died;
But love replaced their sorrow; they
Suffered less keenly on that day.

The child was thus arrayed to go
Accompanying him to Salerno;
Gaily she went, and was dismayed
Only because they were delayed
By length of journey from the goal
Where her dear lord should be made whole.
And when at last the way was done
He took her to the learned one,

And told him he had found the maid
On whom the power had been laid
To work his cure, and therewith he
Displayed her to him openly.

The leach was slow to credit this.
"Child," asked he, "art thou sure it is
Thine own free will to do this thing?
Or did thy lord contrive to bring
Thee hither by his threat or prayer?"
The maiden gave him answer there,
And said the deed came from her heart,
In which her lord's will had no part.
He, marveling, led her alone
To ask again if by her own
Desire she came, and conjure her,
If any threat or fear there were
As impulse, that she tell it then.
"My child," said he, "pray think again:
Repent this choice in time, and I
Shall tell thee plain the reason why
It may be better so: if thou
Shouldst die ungladly for him now
Thy fair young body's lost, and it
Will help to cure him not a whit.
Conceal me not thy true desire
And I will tell what we require.
I must strip from thee all thy clothes,
And thou wilt feel, when I disclose
Thy naked self, the shamefastness
That's rightly due thee in that stress.
I must bind down thy legs and arms,
And if you dreadest body's harms,
Think of the pain that thou must thole
When I cut out thy heart all whole
And living—while thou livest still.
Little lady, if thy will

Is yet unshaken, let me know.
No little child has suffered so
As thou must suffer here of me.
And when I think what I must see
And do myself, I am distraught
And anxious. Still take thought,
For if a hair's breadth thou repent,
All my travail is vainly spent,
And thou hast lost thy life for nought."
But though he earnestly besought
Her to consider what she willed,
Her firm desire remained unstilled.
The maiden laughed and made reply
(She knew right well her death would buy
Her freedom from all earthly ill),
"Dear master, God's requital will
Be given thee, since thou hast cared
To tell the truth, that I be spared.
I must confess I feel a doubt
That I was formerly without:
I will declare the circumstance
That makes me doubt. I fear the chance
Lest thy unwillingness may be—
Greater than cowardice in me—
A hindrance to this work. Thy speech
Befits a woman, not a leach,—
Or else a hare; thy thought for me
And over-great anxiety
That I should die, will interfere
With thy great leachdom's craft, I fear.
I am a woman, and I dare;
If thou wilt cut me, I prepare
To suffer it right willingly.
The difficulties raised by thee
Others have urgently rehearsed
For me; I might not have traversed
The journey hither, had I not

Showed that I wavered not a jot
And could endure it; thou canst see
I am but made more firm through thee,
And gladly I go as if my chance
Were to partake in some gay dance.
For no extremity can be so great
That some day will not close my fate
And make an end; one little day
Is but cheap payment if I may
Purchase life enduringly
That lasts through all eternity.
And if I will it steadfastly,
Thou hast no right to hinder me.
If thou canst truly undertake
To heal my master, and to make
Me sure of my eternal life,
For God's grace leave all further strife
And do it quickly; let us see
The value of thy mastery.
I am become impatient; lo,
He in whose name I choose to go
To death, is very rich in gree
And generously giveth fee
To those who serve him; He rewards
Most richly those whose service towards
Him hath been greatest, and through Him
This bitterness that makes death grim
Will be like sweetness, followed by
Such sure requital when I die.
A crown is very near me now
In heaven, and I may not bow
My head from it: I have no right,
For I too am a child of light."

When she sufficiently had proved
To him, her spirit was unmoved,
He led her to the smitten man,

And said to him, "My lord, I can
Find naught but goodness in the maid
Who came with thee; be not afraid,
For we shall make thee whole again."
He took the little maid then
Into his secret chamber, where
Heinrich no longer saw her; there
The door was closed, the bolt was shot;
The leach took care her lord should not
Behold the suffering that she
Must thole within that room, where he
Had stored much goodly medicine.
And first he bade the maid begin
By stripping off her clothes, and she
Followed his word obediently.
She rent the broidered raiment down,
And lacking both her shift and gown,
She stood before him nakedly,
And not a whit of shame felt she.
And when the master looked on her,
He thought no fairer creature were
Upon the earth; he pitied her
So sorely that his spirit quailed:
Before the task it almost failed.
The maiden saw a table stand
Before her, high and close at hand;
The master bade her mount it; he
Then bound her down, and hardily
He took a knife whose edge was keen
And apt for such affairs, I ween.
For it was long and goodly, but
It seemed to him it could not cut
As well as he might wish; her need
Had touched him so that, if indeed
She might not have recovery,
He hoped to give death easily.

There was a stone for him to whet
His knife upon, and now he set
The blade upon it, and he drew
The steel across it, sharp and true.
He who had been her only care,
Lord Heinrich, who was waiting there
Behind the door in misery,
Heard the fell sound, and straitly he
Was wracked with pity that he should
See her no more in livelihood.
And he began to seek and spy
A hole to which he might apply
His sight, and in the wall he found
A gap, and saw the maiden bound
And naked, through the opening.

Her body was a lovely thing.
He looked upon himself and her
And to himself he thought: "It were
Not good to follow this intent."
His former purpose underwent
A swift conversion in his thought:
What had seemed good to him was brought
In doubt, and what his mood was driven to
Was freshly thought of now, and new.

Her beauty was before his eyes.
He thought: "How foolish is it and unwise
That I desire to snatch a day
Beyond the limits of my stay
And God's decree, without Whom none
May any longer see the sun.
Indeed, thou knowest not what thou wilt:
Thy life must finally be spilt
In any hap, and this mean life,
So full of discord and of strife,
Though willed by God, is not so fair
That thou needst prize it highly; there

Is doubt moreover if the maid
By dying will have left allayed
Thy suffering: let God's will be,
Whatever He has willed for me:
I will not see this maiden die!"

So thought he; he began to cry
Aloud and smite upon the wall
To have them open at his call.
The master said, "I am not free
To open up the door to thee."
"Nay, master, I'd be spoken to."
"Lord," he replied, "I cannot do
Thy will until my task is done."
"Nay, speak before it is begun!"
"Then through the wall thou tell it me."
"Nay, master, nay; it can not be."

And so he let him pass the door.
And Heinrich went and stood before
The maiden, who was lying bound.
He said: "Good master, I have found
This child too lovely is to die;
I cannot see it, nor will I
Permit her death; let God's will be
Fulfilled as He desires on me.
Bid her arise and make her free,
And all the goods I promised thee
I will redeem and gladly give,
But only let the maiden live."
The Master of Salerno heard
Right joyfully Lord Heinrich's word.
He followed it obediently,
And bade her rise, and made her free.

But when the maiden was aware
Her life might not be given there,
Her mood was turned to heaviness;

She was made sad without redress,
And goodly manners were forgot
While she bewailed this heavy lot.
She struck her breast despairingly
And smote herself so sore that she
Was pitiful to look upon
And had brought tears to anyone
Who might have seen her as she cried,
"Ah, woe is me! I might have died;
I might have had a royal crown
In heaven, but my hopes are down,
And I have miserably lost
What I had gained by that small cost
In giving up my little breath.
Now, it is now, that I know death.
Ah, woe, almighty Jesu Christ,
We have lost honor dearly priced,
My lord and I; the forfeit is
A very great one, mine and his.
If this had been accomplished, he
Would have been made whole, sikerly,
And I had been forever saved."

Thus prayed she for the death she craved;
She never tried so hard to bring
Her will to pass, as in this thing;
And since there was no yielding, she
Turned her to scolding, childishly.
She said, "I pay for cowardice
Of my good lord; men said amiss
When they reported him to me.
They called him brave; but now I see
In saying he was firm and tried
And valorous, they merely lied.
The world has seen mistakenly,
For thou hast been and thou wilt be
A coward evermore; behold,

I would have dared it and been bold,
But ye lacked heart and would not see.
What, master, was the need for thee
To start away in such great fear
When I was bound? A wall was here
Between us two. Hast thou no heart
To see death on another's part,
My lord? Dost thou not dare?
Then I make promise and I swear
That thou shalt get no hurt: 't will be
Moreover very good for thee.
If thou imagine that thy trust
And faith and duty say thou must
Relinquish this, 't is foolish rede
And over-much of faith indeed,
For which God gives but small reward."

However much the maid implored
And scolded them, she won no whit,
For they would give no heed to it,
And were resolved to set her free.
And Heinrich heard her patiently
Although she scolded, as a knight
Is bound to do, who lives aright
According to his chivalry,
Forgetting nought of courtesy.

When that uncured, unhappy guest
Had clothed the maid, and she was prest,
And he had given bounty to
The leach as he had sworn to do,
He traveled quickly home again
Although he knew that surely then
He would find scorn from all folk there:
But he relied upon God's care.

The little maid so sorely wept
Meantime, and so intensely kept

Her sorrow wakeful, that her life
Was almost quenched in that dire strife.
But God, who can so clearly see
(*Cordis Speculator* he)
Into the heart's need of all men,
Looked kindly on her sorrow then.
He knew her faith; though he thought best
To put them both to searching test
As He had done to Job the Good;
He knew their faith and loyal mood
By trying them; He let them see
How dear to Him are loyalty
And faith and pity, for he closed
The tale of suffering imposed
Upon the two: He worked a cure
And Heinrich was made whole and pure
In body of his foul disease.

So, without any remedies
Heinrich was made hale again; each day
God was his guardian on his way,
And he grew beautiful once more
As he was twenty years before.
But in the midst of joy restored
Sir Heinrich's wishes journeyed toward
His friends at home; he let them know
—The faithful ones that loved him so—
That they might share the happiness
Which God had made of his distress,
For his delight was their joy too;
They shared it as leal friends must do.
His comrades, knowing he would come,
Rode out to meet him, all and some;
Three days they fared to meet him, so
That they might test and surely know
The miracle on his return.
By sight alone they wished to learn

And not by faith, that they might see
On his fair flesh God's secrecy
Made manifest beyond a doubt.
The parents also journeyed out,
As ye may well believe; they might
Not tarry longer, nor by right
Could any man desire them to.
Then there was joy and great a-do
That never any man may tell
Since God had kept their maid so well;
And now they had them both restored,
Their little daughter and their lord.
Never was greater joy than then,
In having their daughter back again;
Great was their joy when they had found
That both were come back hale and sound.
Amazed they were; they could not make
Due welcome for them, but must break
Into strange words and gestures wild
Over the sight of their dear child.
With love and joy they laughed; they cried
With joy as well (I have not lied
In telling this), and for the space
Of many hours they kissed her face.

The Swabians gave them welcoming
With largesse and with every thing
That shows good will; the folk who dwell
In Swabia are mannered well
And good of heart—none are more so,
As any man must surely know
Who ever lived among them. They
Received him on his homeward way
With joyfulness; but what avail
If I should here prolong the tale
Beyond its need, and make it more?
Heinrich was richer than before

In goods and fame; but he had learned
To keep his spirit always turned
To God, for he had grown to be
Obedient to His decree
Far more than in the earlier days:
Thus would his honor last always.

The worthy pair who were his friends
Richly deserved that his amends
To them should generously be made;
He was no man to have betrayed
Their claim for honor at his hands
Although they made him no demands.
He gave their land to be their own,
The land and homestead, stock and stone,
And all the people dwelling where
He once had lived in his despair.
His little wife he cherished too
In everything that he could do
To cause her pleasure; now she bore
The honor of a wife, and more,
And that was very justly done.

But soon his wise men had begun
To give him counsel that his life
Were better ordered with a wife.
And yet their voice lacked unity.
He heard their speeches and then he
Responded that he wished to send
For all his kinsmen, to the end
That they might meet and tell him there
What they advised in this affair,
And he would do as they advised.
And so he sent for those he prized
Who bore his name and were his kin.
And when they all had entered in
He told them what had been proposed;
And with one voice his kin disclosed

That they agreed the time had come
For him to marry; but now some
Were disagreed about the choice;
They spoke no longer with one voice,
But some urged that and some urged this,
As folk are apt to, when there is
Debate and question of the way.

When Heinrich realized that they
Were disagreed, he spoke and said:
"Ye know the tale of how I led
A life of anguish some time past,
Hateful to men, and how at last
I was made whole by God's decree.
Now no man can raise fear in me.
Tell me, my kinsmen, in God's name,
Who graciously removed my shame,
What is the debt I owe those folk
By whom I have thrown off the yoke
Of my disease and misery,
And am made whole again, and free?"

They answered him, "Thou art in fee
To them for property and life
Regained through them." His little wife
Stood close beside him, and he smiled
At her. "This maiden, as a little child,"
He said, "—so ye have heard—was fain
To give me back my health again,
And I was healed through her. Ye see
Her standing here right close by me,
And she is no more bond than I.
Now I am urged by love and by
My will thereto, that I should take
This little maid to be my mate.
God grant ye favor this, and she
Shall be my wife, right certainly.
But if it be not granted, I

Shall tarry wifeless till I die,
For I know well I am in fee
To her for life and property.
For love of God I ask you, say
That ye agree; give me no nay."

Then rich and poor alike made one
Reply: Heinrich had rightly done
In choosing this, they said; they found
A-plenty of priests, and both were bound
Together by them as man and wife.
So they lived well, a happy life,
Until together they died and passed
Into undying life at last—
As all men must; and God grant we
May earn what they earned, sikerly.

AMEN.

BEATRICE: A LEGEND OF OUR LADY[1]

(Translated by Harold de Wolf Fuller)

From making comes me little store:
Folk rede me that I give it o'er,
Nor aught my hapless wit bestir;
Yet for the goodness great of her
Who mother and maid hath always been
Have I begun this wonder sheen
Which God did soothly work whilere
To Mary's glory who Him bare.

I will begin about a nun
My verse: God grant me when 't is done
It stands well writ, and every line
Be semblant to the truth divine,
Nothing lacking in no degree,
As Brother Gysbrecht told it me,
A friar who the world forsook;
He found it whylom in his book;
He was an old year-aged man.
The nun of whom I first began
Was courtly in her manners, nay,
There beth no one still to-day
Like unto her, I ween,
In seemly bearing and in mien.
That I praise her body bright,
Her store of beauty, dear to sight;
That a theme unfitting were.
Yet will I tell you what her care
Was wont to be, for years and more,

[1] Reprinted by permission of Harold de Wolf Fuller and the Harvard Coöperative Society.

In the cloister where she habit wore:
There was she sacristan.
I tell you truly of this nun
She ne'er was late nor made delay,
Neither by night nor by day.
In her work was all her search;
She rang the hours in the church;
She heeded light and ornament,
And did awake the whole convent.

This gentle maid was not without
Love, that ranging all about
Worketh wonders without name.
Whylom cometh thereof but shame,
Sorrow and grief and wanhope sad;
Whylom it maketh good and glad.
Even the wise man turneth fool,
And he becomes of love the tool,
Is it him well or woe.
Such its power he cannot know
Whether to speak or hold him still,
To gain thereby of love his will.
Many fall prone at love's own feet,
Who erst rise up when love thinks meet.
Love maketh man of bounty free,
Who, but it were for love's decree,
Had held his treasure to the last.
Eke be there folk of gentle cast,
What they owe, be it great or small,
They share, in love,—their very all:
Wealth and jollity and rue;
Love, like this love, call I true.
I could not tell you all, I ween,
Whether of joy or whether of teen,
That from the rills of love doth run.
Forbear ye, thus, to blame the nun
If that she no escape could gain

From the arms of love that held her ta'en.
For 't is the devil's steadfast aim
Man's heart and body to inflame:
Late and early, day and night,
He brings thereto his utter might.
By base and evil wiles, wherein
He's skilled, he lured with fleshly sin
The nun, that she had gladly died.
God she beseeched and sorely cried
That He of his grace would pity her.
She spake: "Lo, swich a sufferer
From love am I, and eke so hurt,—
That knows He to whom all is cert,
From whom no marvels hidden lie,—
That of my wits bereft am I.
Another life I straight must lead;
This habit will I quit for need."

Hear ye what, after, her befel:
She sent for the youth that pleased her well,
Whereto in her heart she felt such love,
Humbly with a letter, whereof
The meaning was he come with speed,
And it would profit him indeed.
Men came to where the youth did dwell;
He took the letter and read it well,
Which to him sent his little friend.
Then was his sorrow at an end.
He made him haste to come to her,
For, since of age they twelve years were,
Love had ruled betwixt these twain
That oft they suffered many a pain.
With all his speed he rode
Cloisterward, where she abode.
To the window then he turned,
Where, if it might be so, he yearned
His love to speak to and to see.

Not long thereafter tarried she:
She hasted her, and soon him found
Before the window that was bound
With iron bars, along and thwart.
Often they sighed in wretched sort,
Since she within and he outside,
Confused by love, must needs abide.
So long awhile they thus-wise sate
That I uneath it could relate
How oft her hue waxed sudden pale.
"Ah, welaway!" did she bewail,
"Out-chosen love, me is it woe;
Speak to me a word or so,
And to my heart some comfort do;
Lo, all my trust is unto you.
Love's arrow hath struck in my heart,
That I abye the bitter smart;
And nevermore shall I but grieve,
Till ye, my love, can it out-reave."

He gan her answer with impress,
"Sweetheart, well wot ye happiless
We long have borne the ways
Of love,—yea, all our days;
Nor came we twain to so much bliss
Whereat we might together kiss.
Lady Venus, that divine,
Who put it in your heart and mine,
May God, our Lord, her doom,
That two such buds she lets not bloom,
But sees them wither more and more.
If only I could win you o'er,
And you this habit would forgo,
And unto me a time would show
When I might lead you out from here,
Then would I ride and purchase, dear,
Good woolen clothes, of costly kind,

Which eke with peltry should be lined:
Skirt and surcoat and mantle weed.
Nor reck ye aught of hapless need;
With you I will adventures meet,
Joy and sorrow, the bitter and sweet.
Take for a pledge my faith."
"Out-chosen friend," the maiden saith,
"That will I gladly take from you,
And with you so far journey, too,
That in this convent none shall say
Whitherward we have fared away.
From this evening just a week
Come hither and for me seek
Out in this garden fine,
Under an eglantine.
There watch for me, and to your side
I'll come and be your bride,
To go with you where'er ye will,
Save if beset by sudden ill
Or cares that be too much for me:
Withouten fail I'll come to thee;
And, I beseech thee, tell me true
That thou, dear lover, wilt come there, too."

Their troth they gan each other plight.
He took his leave and went forthright
Where ready saddled was his steed.
He mounted up with speed,
And at an amble rode away,
Townward over a grassy lay.
His love not once did he deny,
Next day he went to the mart there by
And bought him scarlet cloth and blue,
Whereof he then let make all new
A mantle and a great capote,
And a gown and a coat,—
Each of them lined at point device:

No one on goodlier pelt cast eyes,
Worn among women anywhere;
They praised it all that saw it there.
Dagger and girdle and almonier
He bought for her, good and dear;
Caps and finger-rings of gold,
And jewels manifold.
For all those jewels he took good heed
To get whatever a bride should need.
He bare five hundred pounds with him,
And went in the hour of evening dim
Out of the city secretly.
So carried all that treasury
Upon his steed securely dight;
And cloisterward rode forthright
Out to that garden fine,
Under the eglantine.
He sat him down upon the grass
Until his love should that way pass.

Of him will I make as now an end,
And tell you of his gentle friend.
Ere midnight rang she once again
The matins. Love did her great pain.
When the matins had been sung
Both by old and young,
Who thither dwelt in that convent,
And they once more their steps had bent
To the dormter,—all but one,—
Then did she linger there alone
In the choir, and said her prayer,
As she had done so often there.
She kneeled her down before the altar
And spake, the while her lips did falter,
"Mary, Mother, sweetest name,
Now hath my body, to my shame,
To bear this habit no longer power.

Thou knowest well, in every hour,
Man's heart and life, wherever led:
Lo, I have fasted and I have read,
And I have taken discipline;
It's all for nought my pains have been.
For love me under foot hath hurled,
And I perforce must serve the world.
As truly, Lord, as Thou in grief
Wert hanged—on each side a thief,—
And on a cross didst suffer wrack,
And Lazarus to life ledst back,
Where he lay sepulchred indeed;
So shouldst Thou know my bitter need,
And all my erring acts forgive,
For I a sinful life must live."

Thereafter out of the choir she went
To an image, and kneeling bent
Before it, and said her prayer,
Where Mary stood immobile there.
She cried, "Maria!" with impress,
"Day and night did I confess
My trouble great, fulfilled with awe,
Yet is it me no better a straw.
My wits will be me nigh away
If I more in this habit stay."
Then laid she by her gear in haste,
And on our Lady's altar it placed.
Her shoon she took off too.
Now hear what she shall do:
The key of the sacristy she hung
By th' image of the Virgin young.
And I will tell you truly why
She meant to have it so near by:
If at prime-tide they for it sought
They would find it soon, she thought;
For it is true, since days of yore,

Who Mary's image moves before
That he his eyes thitherward throws,
And utters "Ave" ere he goes,
"Ave Maria": of that is she aware,
And that is why she hung it there.

Now went she in her trouble sad,
Only in a kirtle clad,
To where a door she knew to be.
This she opened craftily,
And secretwise went out,
With silence all about;
Into the garden she went with awe,
And soon thereafter the youth her saw.
He said, "Dear lady, have no fear.
It's your friend that ye see here."
Whenas they both together came,
Then she began to blush with shame
That in a kirtle there she stood,
Bare of foot, without her hood.
He said again, "My heart's delight,
'Twere better far ye were bedight
With costly clothes, most fair to see.
I prithee be not wroth with me
If that I give you good and fine."
Then went they under the eglantine,
And all she needed knew he how
To give in plenty full enow.
Of gowns he gave her passing fair;
Blue was it she put on there,
Well-shaped at point device.
He smiled on her in friendly wise;
Then said he, "Dear, this heaven-blue
Looks better than that grey on you."
Two stockings drew she on,
And two shoon of Cordovan,
Which seemlier she found

Than sandals that were bound.
A silken hood and veil of white
He gave her, also, on that night,
Wherewith she straight her head arrayed.
Then the youth kissed the gentle maid
Kindly on her lips so fair:
Him thought, as she stood before him there,
The day had broke indeed.
He turned him quickly to his steed,
He put her on his saddle-bow,
And at an amble fared they so
Till it in sooth began to dawn;
And no one saw where they had gone.
Then it grew lighter in the east.
She said, "God, comfort of great and least,
Now must Thou truly us bestead.
I see in the dawn the light of red;
If I had not with you come out,
I should have rung the prime, no doubt,
As I so oft have done,
In the cloister of religion.
I fear this journey I shall rue,
The world I hold so little true.
Though I to it have given me o'er,
It's like a chapman's store,
Where finger-rings of baser mould
Are falsely given for gold."
"Ah, what sayst thou, purest one!
If e're thou art left deserte alone,
May I with God's anger quake.
Wherever we our way betake
I'll leave thee not, whate'er betide,
Unless us bitter death divide.
How canst thou doubt me, what I mean?
For never hast thou in me seen
Aught of despite or vileinye.
Since that first day I chose out thee

Never a thought my mind hath given,
Nay, to an empress even:
Let grant of such I worthy were,
Love, I'd never leave thee for her.
Believe this surely, as 'tis right.
I carry with us, choice and white,
Five hundred pounds of silver here.
Whereof thou shalt be mistress, dear;
And so we fare in many a land,
Yet shall we still have gifts on hand,
Within these seven years or so."
Thus went they at an amble slow
Until they to a forest came
Where birds made merry with their game.
So loud they warbled their sweet sound
That men might hear it all around,
Each singing after his own kind.
Brightsome flowers you there could find,
Blossoming fair on that green field,
Which daintiest smell did yield.
Pure and clear was the air,
And many trees stood there,
Upright, with leafage thick above.
The fair youth looked upon his love,
For whom he felt such longing sweet.
He said, "Dear love, is it you meet,
Let's here alight and gather flowers;
Here were it fit to pass the hours
As faithful lovers may."
"What!" she cried, "ye'd have me, say,
Here on this field to make me bold,
Like as a woman that wins gold
And basely forfeits her honour's name!
Certes, so had I little shame.
No thought of this had filled your mind,
But that ye were unkind.
Alas! I rue my piteous state!

God give you for this thought His hate!
Be silent further of such words,
And list how in the dale the birds
Sing their songs of mirth and joy.
The less shall you the time annoy
When gently by your side
I lie and am your bride,
To bring your heart delight
Throughout the hours of the night.
Forsooth, well may it sorrow me
Ye reck my love at so light a fee."

He said, "Love, be not angry,—nay,
Let come from God derray and pain
If ever I grieve you thus again."
She said, "I forgive it you then.
Ye are my trust above all men
That live or yet shall come.
Though met me here fair Absalom,
And it were granted with him to bide
A thousand years, what might betide,
In rest and joyful ease;
This chance, I swear, would me displease,
For on you, dear, my joy is set,
And you I never could forget,
Let no one think I could.
Nay, if I in heaven stood
And ye in the world here far below,
To come to you I were not slow.
Ah! let not God His anger wreak
That I thus dully chose to speak.
Of heavenly bliss, the littlest bit,
On earth there's nothing like to it:
There is the least joy so complete
That souls find nothing else so sweet
As to love God ever without end.
All earthly things offend,

The worth they have not of a hair
Beside the smallest blessing there;
And wise they be that turn that way,
How be it I must go astray,
And into great sin wander, too,
Dear, fair lover, all for you."

Thus they conversed to their avail;
They rode both hill and dale.
Shortly, forsooth, I could not tell
All that betwixt these twain befel.
They rode on at this ambling pace
Forth so far that into a place
They came stood sweetly in a vale,
Which so to please them did not fail
That there they stayed full seven years
In mirth of life, without all tears.
Then each gan other's list obey,
And won together two children they.
After the seven years were past,
And all their pence were gone at last,
Needs must they reck what was on hand
Of treasures brought from out their land.
Clothes and jewels and steed
They sold for half their worth, at need.
Eftsoon, alas! was all away.
Then wist they not what next essay;
Certes, no mantle could she spin
Wherewith their lifehood there to win.
The time in that land was very dear
For food and wine and beer,
And all that eat man gladly would:
Thus there befel them little good;
And liefer had they far been dead
Than fare about and beg for bread.
Great was their trouble, it made them part:
Know ye they did so, heavy at heart.

The man was lacking in good faith;
He left her there, the story saith,
All woe-begone, and went away;
She never saw him from that day.
Yet stayed there yonder in her care
Two children, oh, surpassing fair.

She spake: "Now there hath come to me
What late and early I feared might be.
Here shall I tarry in trouble sad,
For he hath left me ill-bistad
With whom my life and troth I placed.
Mary, Mother, if that Thou mayst,
For me and my two children cry,
That we of hunger may not die.
What shall I do, me caitiff wife!
Now must I body and inward life
Befleck with the sinful deeds I dread.
Mary, Mother, stand me in stead.
What though a mantle I could spin,
I might not therewith win
In two long weeks a crust;
Perforce then go I must
Beyond the town upon a field
To try what gold my body yield,
And buy me food in wretched sort.
Lo, of honour 'twould fall short
To leave my children this plight within."
Thus went she to a life of sin.
For in the tale, parfey, one hears
How for ths space of seven years
Into the world she went
A common wife, and lent
Her tender body to greatest shame,
Staining with sin her fairest name.
Little her joy and great her pain:
She did it for a sorry gain

To guard her children well.
What boots it all to tell.
Those piteous sins and sore
Within the fourteen years she bore!
Yet left she not, whate'er
Her sorrow was or her despair,
But that she read each day and prayed
The seven hours of the Maid.
So prayed and read to Mary's honour
That all the sins that were upon her
Might lightened be from off her soul,
And she withheld from further dole.

Whenas the fourteen years were past,
Into her heart God sent at last
Repentance and such pain
That she with a naked sword were fain
Her head were struck off utterly
Rather than more a sinner be
With her fair body, as she had done.
Day and night she made her moan
That her eyes were tearless never.
She said, "Maria, Virgin ever,
Fountain above all women blest,
Forsake not me, so hard distressed.
Lady, bethink Thee mercifully
That of my sins it irketh me,
And with them, eke, my heart is sore.
So many they are I know not more
With whom they were, nor where might be.
Alas! oh, what shall become of me!
Well may I fear the Judgment Day,—
God's love from me is hid away,—
When each misprise shall come to light,
Of rich and poor, of every wight;
And all man's sins shall then be wroken,
Save they be free beforehand spoken

With penitence and penance done,—
That know I true for every one.
Forthy am I in much despair.
Although I wore each day a hair,
And crept with it through many lands,
On my feet and on my hands,
Woolen-clad, barefoot without shoe,
Yet, oh, little could I do,
To be of guilt and sorrow free,
Lady, but Thou comfort me.
Fountain above all blessed joy,
Thou hast saved many from annoy,
As with Theophilus appeared.
He was of sinners the greatest feared,
And to the devil had given him whole,
Both his body and his soul,
And was become his man:
Lady, Thou loosed'st him the ban.
Albeit I am a caitiff wife
And sunken in a sinful life,
Whatever I did or said,
Lady, bethink Thee I ever read
A prayer to Thy dear honour due:
Oh, show to me Thy pity, too.
Lo me, so sad and full of grief,
And seeking of Thy grace relief!
I ask Thee this and unafraid,
For never was he ill-apayd
Who Thee greeted, Maiden free,
Every day with an Ave Marie.
Who Thee a prayer will gladly read
Let him certain be indeed
That from it there will come amend.
Lady, joy fills Thee without end,
Sweetly chosen bride of God,
For that Thy Son did send abroad
To Nazareth, where one Thee sought,

A greeting like to which was brought
Nor ere that time by mortal heard.
Therefore is the self-same word
Still to thy heart so sweet to hear
That everichone to Thee is dear
Who greets Thee like that one before.
So he with sin were buried o'er,
Yet wouldst Thou him to mercy lead
And free before Thy Son him plead."
This was the plea and this the moan
Uttered each day this sinner prone.
She took her children by the hand
And fared forth with them through the land,
In poverty from place to place,
And lived by begging in heavy case.
So long she wandered all around
That she the cloister once more found
Where years before she was a nun,
And came there after the sun,
Late at even to a widow's cot,
Where, by God's grace, she spared her not
To beg for hostelage that night.
"To drive you hence were 't scarcely right,"
Said the widow, "with your children;
It seemeth me they weary ben.
But sit ye all and take ye rest,
And I will share with you distressed
All that our Lord entrusted me
Through His dear Virgin Mother free."
Thus stayed she with her children twain,
And of the cloister gan she fain
Make question what the other knew.
"Tell me, good mistress," said she, "do,
Is this a sisters' convent, say?"
"It is," she answered, "by my fey;
'Tis richly cherished of God's love,
Nor such another hears one of.

The nuns who habit wear within
I ne'er heard mention made of sin,
Nor aught about them to their shame
Whereof they leastwise might have blame."

Who there by her two children sat
Made answer, "Whereby know ye that?
I heard agone not many a week
Yet much about one sister speak;
As it remembereth me of her,
Of sacristan she had the care.
Who told me this he did not lie:
It's now some fourteen years aby
That from the cloister she arose
And went her whither no one knows,
Nor in what land she chose abide."
Then was the widow sorely tried.
She said, "Think ye I dote!
But cease such foolish tales to quote
About the sacristan in sin,
Else rest ye not this house within.
The blessed office in this place
She's held for fourteen years the space
That never was she seen away
The matin's time of even a day,
Out-taken she in sickness were;
And madder he than any cur
Who said of her aught else but good.
Certes, as any virgin should,
She bears a heart of purest thought:
Through all the cloisters though one sought,
Twixt Elba and Girond that lie,
No nun, I ween, he should espy
More seemly lives than she."

Who long had laboured sinfully,
To her there seemed a marvel shown.
She said, "Mistress, make it me known,

How is her father clept, and mother?"
And when she wist the one and other,
That she was meant she knew forthright.
Ah, God! how she wept that night,
Secretwise before her bed!
"No other chance I have," she said,
"Than that my heart with shame doth grieve;
O Mary, bring my soul reprieve!
My wicked deeds are purged not,
And if I saw an oven hot,
With gleeds of fire glowing deep,
And from its mouth with flames a-leap,
Fain were I then to creep therein,
So I were quit of all my sin.
Lord, upon wanhope is thy curse,
So will I trust me not the worse.
Lo me, who not despair of grace,
Howe'er I be, as in this case,
In anguish and beset with fear.
For never was there sinner here,
Since that fair hour Thou cam'st to earth,
And tookest then man's shape and worth,
And suffered'st death upon the Tree,
But right anon Thou wouldst him free.
Who sought for grace, in grief and shame,
He found it ever, tho' late he came;
As soothly happened yet again
To the one sinner of the twain
That hung at Thy right side.
Lord, 'tis our comfort undenied
That Thou receivèd'st him unchid.
True penitence of care doth rid.
That by this do I plainly see:
For said'st Thou not, 'Friend, thou shalt be
In my Kingdom with me to-day,
I tell thee truly, every way!'
Eke, Lord, was it for certain clear,

When Gisamas, the murderer,
At last for blessed grace did crave,
That then nor gold nor scot he gave,
Nor nought than for his sins distress.
Thy mercy, Lord, is fathomless:
No more let measure it than try
Within one only day to dry
The ocean ways to fallow ground.
Thus was there never sinner found
The equal, Lady, of Thy grace.
Why should I, then, an outcast base,
From Thy dear tenderness be rent,—
So haggard I and penitent!"

As she lay in this her prayer,
Fell a drowse upon her there,
And peacefully she slept and dreamed.
Out of a vision, as it seemed,
A voice there came to her did say,
Whereas asleep she lay,
"Woman, so long hast thou made thy moan
That Mary to thee hath pity shown,
For She hath prayed thee free.
Go to thy cloister, hastily,
And find the doors all open wide
Whereout thou cam'st at yonder tide
The leman of thy fair young lover,
Who thee left in want to suffer.
All thy habit find thou may'st
Lying upon the altar placed.
Shoon and veil and gear
Thou may'st do on withouten fear.
For this gramercy to Marie,
For of the sacristy the key,
That fore the image thou didst lay
That stilly night thou went'st away,
E'er hath She warded it so well,

All of these fourteen years the spell,
That thy forthfaring no one wist,
Nor aught else of thy presence missed.
Throughout the time that thou hast swerved,
Mary, herself, for thee hath served,
Thee in the full likeness of:
That hath the Maiden from above,
Sinner, done because of thee.
She wills thee to the cloister flee;
No one thou'lt find upon thy bed,—
It is from God what hath been said."

Thereafter, but a moment's part,
From out her sleep she did astart.
She said: "O Jesu, mighty Lord,
Let not the devil's ill accord
Into more wretchedness me bring,
Than yet to me is happening!
If to the cloister I were sent,
And like a thief, paraunter, hent,
Then were I brought to greater shame
Than when the convent I outcame.
I beseech Thee, God the good,
By Thy dear precious blood
That from Thy side outburst;
If the voice that hailed me erst
Hither hath come for my avail,
Let it return withouten fail
Another time beside me here,
And yet a third time, plain and clear,
To bid me now, withouten mo,
Back again to my cloister go.
Then will I worship all my days
The Virgin's name and Her up-raise."

Hear ye, upon that other night
There came to her a voice forthright,
That called to her and still did say,

"Woman, too long wilt thou delay.
Go back to thy cloister fearlessly;
God will surely comfort thee.
Do Mary's bidding,—thou knowest what,—
It is Her message, doubt it not."
Now hath she heard it yet again,
The voice that called her clear and plain
And to the cloister urged her still;
Yet durst she not the hest fulfil.
The third night lay this laggard sweet,
And pondered, "Is it elves' deceit
O'ercomes me here so late?
Ah, let me then as quickly mate
The fiend's power and his despite!
And so he come to me to-night,
Lord, as do him so confuse
That from his might this house he loose,
Nor set me evermore aghast.
Mary, have ruth on me at last!
And if the voice from Thee was sent,
That bade me enter my convent,
I pray Thee, Lady, by Thy Son,
It come again, as it hath done."
Then lay she watching, soft and still.
A voice there came of God's own will,
Along with an overgreat light,
And said, "Thou doest not aright
That wilt my hest in all defy;
For Mary's messenger am I.
Too long wilt thou delay;
Go to the cloister yet to-day:
Thou'lt see the doors all open wide;
Go where thee list on every side.
Thy habit find thou mayst
Lying upon the altar placed."
When the voice so much had said,
Might the sinner on her bed

With own eyes see the heavenly glore.
She spake: "Now need I doubt no more
The voice it hath but God obeyed,
And is a message from the Maid.
That may I believe without all teen,
For it hath come with light so sheen.
Forthy no longer I forbear,
But to the cloister will repair;
And I will do it in good faith,
For trust of the words our Lady saith,
And will my children both the twain,
To God, our Father, yield again;
He will them care for as He knows."
Then spared she not with her own clothes
To cover them and comfort make,
Silently that they might not wake.
She kissed them on the lips, the two;
She said, "Children, farewell to you.
For trust of the words our Lady saith
I here will leave you in good faith.
Yet had not Mary prayed me this,
I would not give you o'er, I-wis,
For all the wealth that's Rome within."
Hear ye what now she shall begin.

Now goes she thenceward making moan
Toward the cloister all alone.
When to the garden she had won,
She found the door was ope as soon.
She went therein without delay.
"Mary," she said, "have thanks alway
That I have come within this wall;
God grant me that no ill befal."
Where'er she came she found each door
Did open to her as of yore.
To the church she her betook
And in secret thus she spoke:

"God, Master, I beseech that Thou
Wilt help me to my habit now,
Which I let, fourteen years aby,
Upon our Lady's altar lie,
At night, whenas I fled away."
Hear ye, 'tis not a lie I say,
It is the truth ye hear:
Shoon and veil and gear
In the self same place she found
Where she agone had laid them down.
She drew them on with haste
And uttered: "God in heaven placed,
And Mary, Maiden pure and free,
Forever blessed shall ye be.
Thou art of every virtue flower;
In Thy clean virgin hour
Thou bar'st a child, without all woe,
That Lord shall be forever mo.
Thou art our pledge above all worth;
Thy child did make the heaven and earth.
This power from God hath come to Thee,
And stands at Thy behest forthy.
The Lord, who is our Brother,
Thy bidding mayst Thou ask as Mother,
And He Thee precious Daughter call,
That I am comforted withal.
Whoe'er from Thee will grace await
Shall find it sure, though come he late.
Thy help I know is measureless:
Though I had sorrow and distress,
Yet such a change is wrought by Thee
That I am now of sorrow free,—
Oh, rightly may I praise Thy name."
The key of the sacristy, the same,
Was hanging fore the Virgin young,
Where years before she had it hung.
Upon herself she hung the key,

And choirward went where she did see
Clear lamps in every corner burn.
Then to the books she gan her turn,
And in its place she laid each one,
As, oft before that, she had done.
The Virgin Mary prayed she, too,
That yet no harm might her undo;
And eke her children that were left
At the widow's house, so sore bereft.
Within this had the night so passed
The clock began to strike at last,
That one the midnight hour kenned.
She took the bell-rope by the end
And rang the matins so amain
They heard it on all sides again
Who there above in the dormter lay.
Then gan they file below straightway
Down from the dormter, one and all.
They wist of it nor great nor small:
In the cloister all that time she stayed
Without reproach or foul upbraid.
Mary had ever served for her
As she her very self it were.
Thus changed this sinner her piteous ways,
To Mary's honour, whom men praise,
The Maiden of the heaven high
Who always faithfully is by,
And stands her friends in goodly stead,
Who with distress are burdenèd.
This gentle maid, as I have heard,
Is nun, as she was formerward.
Now will I not forget so eft
Her children twain, which that she left
At the widow's house so ill-bistad,
For neither bread nor gold they had.
I could not tell enow, I ween,
When they their mother have not seen,

How sore and bitterly they cried.
The widow sat her by their side
For pity of their heaviness.
She said, "Now to the good abbess
With these two children will I start;
God shall put it into her heart
That she will not withhold them boon."
Then put she on their clothes and shoon,
And to the convent with them went.
She said, "Lady, be thou attent
Unto the need of these two wight.
The mother in this heavy plight
Hath left them at my house ere day,
And now hath farèd forth her way,
Where, east or west, she hath not said;
And they are thus uncomforted.
But wist I how, I'd help them fain."
The abbess answered her again,
"Care for them well,—ye shall have meed,
Nor ever ill shall it you speed
That one hath left them with you so.
Men shall them gifts of love bestow
Each day, for God's sweet sake.
Bid someone here himself betake,
Who them shall fetch to drink and eat;
If lacks them aught let me it weet."
The widow then was pleasèd well
That such good hap to her befel.
She took the children with her there,
And had of them the goodly care.
Who them had given suck,—the mother,
And suffered pain for one and other,
Her heart was blithe indeed
When that she wist them given heed,
Her children, which she had fordone
In heavy plight and from them gone.
She had nor fear nor trouble sore

For her two children ever more.
A holy life henceforth she led;
Yet many sighs and many a dread
She had both night and day,
For anguish in her heart that lay
Of all her sins, the foul and quade,
Which to make known she was afraid
Or them uncover to any wight,
Whether to speak or them endyte.

Thereafter came there on a day
An abbot, for it was his way
To pay them visit once a year,
As who would learn if there were here
Any report or evil fame
Whereof mayhap they might have blame.
Upon this day when he was come
Then lay this sinner wearisome
Within the choir and read her prayer,
In great misgiving and despair.
The devil still to tempt her sought,
That she the sinful deeds she wrought
Before the abbot might not bring.
Now as she lay thus pondering,
She saw how passed there by a knight
Was clothed utterly in white,
He bare a naked child in his arm,
Whose hue of death did her alarm.
He threw an apple up and down
And caught it ere it fell to ground
Before the child and made it game.
The maiden saw what, there, became,
Where in her prayer she lay,
And said, "Friend, if it happen may
That thou from God art come to me,
Then I beseech by His decree
Thou hide it not, but truly say'st

Why thou before the child play'st
With that fair apple, bright and red,
And in thy arm he lieth dead.
Thy game doth him in naught avail."
"Certes, nun, thou answerest well.
Aught of my game he cannot know,
Neither little nor mo,
He's dead, and hears and sees me not.
All like to him, God knows no jot
That thou dost read and fast:
That will not help thee at the last;
'Tis trouble lost, nor aught will win
For that thou takest discipline.
Thou art in sin so stifled o'er
That God doth hear thy prayers no more,
In His kingdom there on high.
I rede thee that thou hastily
To thy father the abbot turn,
And let him altogether learn
Of each misprise, of one and all:
Be not henceforth the devil's thrall.
The abbot shall absolve thee straight
Of foul sins that thee so bait.
But if thou wilt not of them speak,
Heavy God's hand that shall them wreak."
The youth went then from out her eyes,
Nor more revealed in any wise.
All that he said she not forgot.
Next day she went, ere other what,
To the abbot, and would be heard
Her penitence from word to word.
The abbot in his heart was seer;
He said to her, "My child, my dear,
To thee I am no shrinking friend;
Bethink thee well, from first to end,
Of all thy sins, of every one."
And at this moment gan the nun

The holy abbot sit beside,
And to him all her deeds confide
Her life from the beginning of:
How that she with a foolish love
Confusèd was in such degree
That she must needs let lying be
Her habit, with much fear and falter,
One night upon our Lady's altar;
And with a man the cloister fled
Who won two children of her bed.
All that her ever had befel
She spared her not to note it well.
Of aught was in her heart attaint,
She made the abbot full acquaint.
When her confession she had done,
The abbot spake, the holy one:
"Daughter, I will absolve thee straight
Of all the sins thou dost relate,
Whereof so much thou wast afflict.
Let praisèd be and benedict
God's blessèd Virgin Mother!"
He laid his hand upon the other,
Upon her head, and pardoned her.
He said, "In sermon good it were
I made full clear thy history;
But yet so careful shall I be
That thou and eke thy children twain
Forever shall not hear again
The shame of it, in thy despite.
To guard it close, it were not right,
This miracle which that our Lord
Unto His Mother did accord.
I would that it be sanctified,
And hope that there shall, thee beside,
Many a sinner turn his ways
And our dear blessèd Lady praise."

He let them know,—the whole convent,—
Or ere from thence he homeward went,
How that it with a nun befel;
Yet could there no one tell
Who that she was,—that still was hid.
The abbot left, as God did bid.
The nun's two children tended he,
And bore them in his company.
He put grey habit on them then,
And they became two holy men.
Their mother's name was Beatrice.
Praise due to God and honour is,
And Mary eke, who God did bear
And wrought this miracle so fair:
She holp the nun in her distress.
Now pray we all, both more and less,
Who have this miracle heard read,
That Mary surely us bestead,
And plead for us in that sweet vale
Where God shall judge us without fail.

AMEN

SAINTS' LIVES

INTRODUCTION TO SAINTS' LIVES

Hagiography, which is concerned with the lives and miracles of the Saints, was a very popular form of literature in the Middle Ages. Its didactic and edifying nature was no disqualification in an age that enjoyed moral instruction and moralizing literature. Saints' lives were written with a purpose: to inculcate holiness and righteousness by example, and to spread and strengthen faith. The legends themselves have been traced to various sources: documentary evidence, tradition, folk-lore, classical mythology, mistaken etymologies, and even to fable, romance, and literary reminiscences (the legend of Gregorius as treated by Hartmann von Aue, for instance, is really a chivalric romance resembling the story of Oedipus, which somehow became attached to the name of Pope Gregory; it is an interesting story, but it is doubtful if it was ever widely believed). The *Aurea Legenda* or *Golden Legend,* written by Jacob of Voraigne in the thirteenth century, represents some of the best of medieval hagiography, for the author of this collection chose with discrimination and showed a critical historical sense in his writing. The edition used for the following translations is that by Grässe, Wratislau, 1890.

SAINT MARGARET

Margaret is so named from a certain precious stone called *margareta*. This gem is small, white, and full of virtue. Thus the blessed Margaret was white in her virginity, small in her humility, full of virtue in the working of miracles. This stone is said to have power against loss of blood, against the heart's suffering, and in behalf of the spirit's comfort. Thus the blessed Margaret had power against the loss of her blood by reason of her constancy, for she was most constant in her martyrdom; against the heart's passion—that is, the temptation of the demon—by reason of her victory, for she herself conquered the Devil; in behalf of the spirit's comfort, by teaching, for by her teaching, she comforted the souls of many, and converted them to faith in Christ. Her legend was written by Theotimus, a learned man.

Margaret was the daughter of Theodosius of Antioch, a patriarch of the heathen: he gave her over to be reared, and she, coming to maturity, was baptized; for which her father held her in great hatred. On a certain day, therefore, in her fifteenth year, while she was watching over her nurse's sheep with other maidens, the Prefect Olybrius passed by, and beholding so beautiful a girl, he was soon inflamed with love for her; and summoning some youths to him, he sent them to her, saying: "Go take her, so that, if she is free, I may marry her; and if she is a slave, I may hold her as a concubine." When she was brought before him, he asked her about her race and name and religion. She told him that she was of noble birth; that her name was Margaret, and that she was a Christian by religion. The Prefect said,

"Two of these things befit thee, for thy bearing is noble and thou art proved a most fair *margarite*, but the third is not fitting: so fair and noble a maiden should not have a god who is crucified." She answered,

"How knowest thou that Christ was crucified?" And he replied,

"From the books of the Christians." Margaret said,

"Since thou mayest read of the suffering and glory of Christ, wherefore art thou so modest as to believe the one and deny the other?" But when Margaret declared that He was crucified of His will for our redemption, but is now living in eternity, the Prefect was angered, and had her cast into prison; and the next day he called her to him and said,

"Vain girl, have pity on thine own beauty and worship our gods, that it may go well with thee." She answered,

"I worship Him Whom the earth fears; before Whom the sea and all creatures are afraid." The Prefect said,

"Unless thou dost my will, I shall cause thy body to be rent apart." Margaret replied,

"For me Christ delivered Himself to death; and likewise I desire to die for Christ." Then the Prefect commanded that she be hung up on the rack and be mangled first with rods and later with iron rakes until her very bones were stripped, so that the blood flowed down from her body as from the purest fount. Those who were present wept and said,

"Ah Margaret, in truth we grieve for thee, for we see thy body thus cruelly mangled: what beauty hast thou lost because of thy lack of belief!—But now at least believe, that thou mayest live." She said to them,

"O evil counsellors, depart and go hence; this torture of the flesh is the salvation of the soul;" and she said to the Prefect, "Thou shameless dog and insatiate lion, thou hast power over the flesh, but Christ reserves the soul." But the Prefect hid his face in his robe, nor could he endure to see such a shedding of blood. Then he had her

taken down and confined in prison, and a marvelous light gleamed there. While she was there she prayed to God that He might reveal to her sight the Enemy who fought against her; and behold a monstrous dragon appeared there: it tried to devour her, but she made the sign of the cross, and it disappeared; or, as is elsewhere recorded, it put its mouth above her head, and stretching its tongue to her very heel, it swallowed her down; but when it wished thereafter to absorb her, she fortified herself with the sign of the cross, and the dragon belched at the sign of the cross and the virgin came forth unharmed. But that which is said of the dragon's devouring her and belching her forth is reputed frivolous and apocryphal.—Again the Devil, in order to deceive her, turned himself into the likeness of a man; and when she saw him she devoted herself to prayer; but after she had arisen the Devil approached her, and, taking her hand, he said,

"Let the things thou hast done be sufficient; let be my person now." But she seized him by the head and cast him on the earth beneath her, and she set her right foot upon his head and said,

"Lie prostrate, proud demon, beneath a woman's feet." But the demon cried out,

"O blessed Margaret, I am conquered: if a youth had done it, I had not cared, but I am defeated by a tender maiden and I suffer the more because thy father and thy mother were my friends." She, however, forced him to tell wherefore he had come. He said he had come to counsel her obedience to the Prefect's exhortations. She forced him also to tell her why he tempted Christians so often. He answered that he had a natural hatred for virtuous men, and although he was often repelled by them, yet he was ever infested by a desire to seduce them; and, since he envied man the happiness that he himself had lost, although he might never recover it, still he strove to take it away from them. He added moreover that Solomon had confined an infinite number of demons in a vase; but after

his death when the demons emitted fire from the vase, and men thought there must be a great treasure there, they broke open the vase, and the demons, coming forth, filled the air. After this the virgin lifted her foot and said,

"Depart, unhappy wretch!" And straightway the demon vanished. Therefore she was made secure; for she who had conquered the chief could surely conquer his aide.

On the next day she was presented to the judge before the assembled people; and, since she scorned to make sacrifice, she was stripped and burnt with flaming torches, so that all who were present marveled how a tender virgin might endure so many torments. Thereafter he had her bound and put in a vessel full of water, so that the force of the pain might increase by a change of sufferings, but suddenly the earth was smitten, and in the sight of all the virgin came forth unharmed. Then five thousand men believed and in Christ's name were converted to the faith; but the Prefect, fearing that others might be converted, gave orders that the blessed Margaret be executed. But she, having asked time for orison, prayed for herself and her persecutors and also for those who held this in memory and those who invoked her with great devotion, adding the prayer that any woman in peril of travail who called on her might bear unharmed offspring; and a voice was heard from Heaven telling her that her prayer was heard. Then she arose from orison and said to the soldier: "Brother, draw thy sword and strike me." He struck off her head at one blow, and thus she received the martyr's crown. She suffered fourteen days before the calends of August, as is recorded in her history. Elsewhere we read: three days before the ides of July. A certain saint said of this virgin: "The blessed Margaret was full of the fear of God, possessed of justice, garbed in religion, and penetrated with pity; she was laudable for her cleanness and singular in her patience: nothing was found in her contrary to the Christian religion; she was hated by her father, but beloved of our Lord Jesus Christ."

SAINT GEORGE

George is so named from *geos*, which is earth, and *orge*, which means cultivate; it means one cultivating earth; that is his flesh. . . . Or the name comes from *gerar*, which is holy, and *gyon* which is arena: he was an arena, for he was heavy by reason of the gravity of his morals, lowly by reason of his humility, and dry of all carnal pleasure. Or the name comes from *gerar*, which is holy, and *gyon*, which is combat: that is, holy champion, since he fought against the dragon in the flesh. . . . His legend is numbered among the apocryphal scriptures in the Council of Nicæa because his martyrdom had no certain record. For we read in the calendar of Bede that he suffered in the Persian town of Dyaspolis, formerly called Lidda, that is near by Joppa; elsewhere that he suffered under the Emperors Dioclesian and Maximian; elsewhere, under Dioclesian Emperor of the Persians, in the presence of eighty kings of his realm. Here, that he suffered under Dacian the Prefect, and the Emperors Dioclesian and Maximian.

George, who was a tribune of the Cappadocian race, came on a certain occasion into the province of Lybia, to a city called Silena. Near by this town there was a pool like a sea, in which a pestilent dragon lay, who had often put to flight the folk that came out armed against him, and going up to the wall of the city, he had infected all of them. Wherefore the citizens were forced to give it two sheep daily in order to mitigate its fury, else it invaded the wall of the city and infected the air, so that many died. When the sheep were almost exhausted, since they might not have a great supply of them, they planned to give a sheep and man together. Now the sons and daugh-

ters of all men were being given, and the lot made exception of none. After nearly all the sons and daughters had been consumed, the daughter of the King was taken by the lot and condemned to the dragon. Then the King spoke, all sorrowful:

"Take from me my gold and silver and the half of my kingdom, and let my daughter go free of this death." The people answered him furiously,

"Thou, O King, didst make this edict, and all our children have died, and yet thou wouldst save thy daughter? Unless thou wilt fulfill for thy daughter what thou didst command for others, we will burn thee and thy house." The King, seeing this, began to weep for his daughter, saying,

"Ah me, my sweet daughter, what shall I do with thee? What shall I say? Shall I never see thy marriage more?" And turning to the people, he said, "I pray that ye grant me a space of eight days to lament my daughter." When the people had granted this, they returned in fury at the end of eight days, saying,

"Why wilt thou ruin thy people for the sake of thy daughter? Behold, all of us are dying by the dragon's breath." Then the King, seeing that he could not free his daughter, put on her royal robes, and embracing her with tears he said,

"Ah me, my sweet daughter, I thought to nourish sons of thine in my royal lap; and now thou goest to be devoured by the dragon. Alas, my sweet daughter, I hoped to invite princes to thy wedding, and adorn the palace with pearls, and hear the drums and organs; but now thou goest to be devoured by the dragon." And he kissed her and sent her forth, saying, "Would that I, my daughter, were dead before thee, since I have lost thee thus!" Then she fell at her father's feet and asked his blessing of him; and when he had given it with tears, she proceeded to the lake.

The blessed George, happening to pass by, saw her there weeping, and he asked her what was amiss. She said,

"Good youth, mount thy horse with all speed and flee, lest thou die with me." George answered her,

"Fear not, maiden, but tell me, what awaitest thou in the sight of all the people?" And she said,

"I see, good youth, that thy heart is great; but wouldst thou die with me? Flee in all haste." He replied,

"I shall not depart until thou tellest me what is amiss." And when she had explained it all to him, he said, "Maiden, fear not, for I shall help thee in Christ's name." And she said,

"Good knight, hasten to save thyself; die not with me. It is enough if I perish alone, for thou canst not free me, and thou wilt but perish with me." While they were speaking thus, the dragon approached and lifted its head out of the lake. Then the maiden trembled and said, "Flee, good master; flee in haste!" Then George, mounting his horse and fortifying himself with the sign of the cross, boldly attacked the dragon that was coming upon him, and bravely flourishing his lance, and commending himself to God, he wounded it sorely and cast it to earth and said to the maiden,

"Maiden, put thy girdle about the dragon's neck without fear." When she had done this, it followed her like the mildest dog. When she had led it to the town, the people, seeing them, began to flee to the hills and mountains, saying, "Woe to us, for now we shall all perish." Then the blessed George beckoned to them, saying,

"Fear not, for the Lord sent me to you that I might free you of what you suffered from the dragon; only believe in Christ and let each of you be baptized, and I shall kill the dragon." Then the King and all the people were baptized; but the blessed George, drawing his sword, slew the dragon and bade them carry it outside the city. Then four pairs of oxen bore it out into a great field; and there were baptized that day twenty thousand folk, barring women and children; and the King had built a church of wondrous size in honor of the blessed Mary and George,

from the altar of which a living spring flowed forth, and cured all the afflicted who drank of it. The King in truth offered an infinite amount of money to St. George but he, not wishing to accept it, commanded that it be given to the poor. Then George gave the King brief instruction concerning four things: that he should care for the churches of God, honor His priests, diligently hear the divine office, and ever be mindful of the poor; and then, having kissed the hand of the King, he departed thence. In other books we read that, while the dragon was proceeding to devour the maiden, George fortified himself with the sign of the cross and attacked and killed the dragon.

In that time, while Dioclesian and Maximian were Emperors, there was such a persecution of the Christians under the Prefect Dacian that within one month eighteen thousand were crowned with martyrdom; wherefore in the midst of so many kinds of torment many Christians deserted and sacrificed to idols. St. George, seeing this, was moved by hearty grief; he gave away all he had, cast aside the military habit, and leaping into the midst of them he cried out,

"All of the gods of the heathen are demons, but the Lord made the Heavens!" The Prefect said to him in anger,

"How canst thou be bold enough to call our gods demons? Say, whence art thou and what is thy name?" George answered him,

"I am called George, and I am sprung of a noble Cappadocian family; by the grace of Christ I conquered Palestine, but I gave up all that I might more freely serve the God of Heaven." When the Prefect was unable to bend him to his will, he commanded that he be put on the rack and that his body be rent with claws member by member; and after torches had been applied to his sides, when the cracks of his vitals were laid open, he ordered them to rub his wounds with salt. That same evening the Lord appeared to him in a great light and gently comforted

him; and so greatly was he strengthened by this fair vision and discourse, that he held the tortures as nothing. Dacian, seeing that he might not overcome him with torture, called a certain magician to him and said,

"The Christians make sport of the torments by their magic arts, and they hold in contempt the sacrifices of our gods." The magician said,

"If I cannot overcome their arts, I will answer with my head." And then, having cast his charms and called on the names of his gods, he mingled poison in some wine and gave it to St. George to drink; but the man of God made the sign of the cross over it, and when he drank it he felt no ill of it. Again the magician mixed in a stronger poison than the first, which the man of God drank without any harm after he had made the sign of the cross. When the magician saw this he fell at his feet straightway and begged his grace with lamentation, and asked to become a Christian: him the Judge soon had executed. The next day he had George placed on the wheel, which was surrounded with a double row of sharp swords; but it was straightway broken, and George was found within unharmed. Then he, being very wroth, had him cast into a vessel full of liquid lead; and he, having made the sign of the cross, entered in; but by the virtue of God he began to be refreshed in it as if it were a bath. When Dacian saw this he thought to weaken him by flattery, since he could not conquer him by threats and torment; and he said to him,

"Thou seest, my son George, how merciful are our gods, who suffer thy blasphemy so patiently, and we are none the less ready, if thou wilt be converted, to be indulgent. Do then, my dearest son, as I say: leave behind thy superstition, and sacrifice to our gods, that thou mayest gain great honor from them and from us." Smiling, George said to him,

"Wherefore didst thou not persuade me from the beginning with flattering speeches rather than with tortures? Behold, I am ready to do what thou askest." Dacian, de-

ceived by this yielding, was glad, and commanded by the crier's voice that all the people should gather and see George, who had so long been unwilling, give in at last and make sacrifice. Therefore the whole city was adorned for joy, and when George went into the temple of the idols to sacrifice, and all the people were rejoicing, he prayed the Lord on bent knees to destroy the temple and the idols all at once, so that to His praise and the conversion of the people nothing of it should remain within; and straightway lightning came down from Heaven and consumed the temple and the gods and priests; and the earth opened and swallowed all that was left of them. . . .Dacian, hearing this, caused George to be brought before him and said,

"What evil grace of thine is this, thou worst of men, that hast committed so great crime?" And George answered him,

"Believe not, O King, that it is so, but go with me again and see me sacrifice." He replied,

"I know thy deceit, for thou wouldst have me engulfed, as thou didst to my gods and temple." George answered him,

"Tell me, miserable man, how can thy gods save thee when they could not save themselves?" The King, very wroth, said to his wife Alexandria,

"I shall die defeated, for I see that I am conquered by this man." She answered,

"O cruel and murderous tyrant, did I not tell thee not to vex the Christians too often, for their god fights for them; and now thou mayest know that I desire to become a Christian." The King, overpowered with astonishment, said to her,

"Alack and alas! Art thou too seduced?" And he caused her to be hung up by the hair and beaten most cruelly by scourges. And while she was being beaten, she said to George,

"George, thou light of truth, where dost thou think I

will go, since I have not been reborn in the water of baptism?" George answered her,

"Be not at a loss, my daughter, for the effusion of thy blood will be reputed a baptism and a crown for thee." Then she, praying to the Lord, gave up the ghost. . . . On the next day George received judgment that he should be dragged through all the city, and afterwards be executed. But he prayed to the Lord that whosoever asked his help might have his prayer granted; and a divine voice came to tell him that he might have what he prayed for. When his prayer was finished he consummated his martyrdom by the cutting off of his head; and this was in the time of Dioclesian and Maximian, who began to rule about the year 287 of our Lord. But when Dacian returned to the place where he was executed, a great fire fell down from Heaven and consumed him and his ministers. . . .

We read in the History of Antioch that, when the Christians went to the siege of Jerusalem, a very beautiful youth appeared to a certain priest, and, revealing himself to him as St. George, leader of the Christians, commanded him that his relics be taken with him to Jerusalem, and that he might be with them. When they were besieging Jerusalem and durst not mount the ladders because of the resistance of the Saracens, the blessed George appeared to them clad in white armor and marked with a red cross, beckoning to them to climb after him in safety and take the city. They, inspirited by this, took the city and slaughtered the Saracens.

SAINT EUSTACHIUS

Eustachius was formerly called Placidus. He was a captain of soldiers under the Emperor Trajan. He was very diligent in works of mercy, but he was devoted to the worship of idols. He had a wife of the same religion, a very charitable woman; and he begot two sons whom he had educated in a splendid manner in accordance with his own magnificent station; and since he pursued works of mercy diligently, he deserved to be illuminated towards the path of truth. On a certain day while he was out hunting he came upon a herd of deer, amongst which he beheld one larger and more beautiful than the rest, which, departing from the company of the others, fled deeper into the forest. While the other knights were occupied by the remaining deer, Placidus pursued this one with all his might and strove to capture it. While he was chasing it with all his strength the stag mounted on a certain cliff, and Placidus came nearer, meditating zealously how he might capture it. As he gazed closely upon the stag, he saw between its horns the shape of the holy cross, gleaming more brightly than the sun, and the image of Jesus Christ, Who spoke to him through the mouth of the stag, even as he did through the ass of Balaam, saying,

"O Placidus, why dost thou persecute Me? I am Christ Whom thou worshippest without knowing it; thy works of charity have ascended to Me, and therefore I am come, and I also chase thee by this stag that thou chasest." Others say that the image itself that appeared between the stag's horns spoke these words. Placidus, hearing this, and moved by a great fear, fell from his horse to the earth; and returning to himself after an hour he arose and said,

"Reveal to me what Thou hast said, and I shall believe in Thee." And Christ said,

"I, Placidus, am Christ, Who created Heaven and earth, Who caused light to be divided from the darkness; Who established the seasons and the days and the years, and formed man from the clay of the earth; Who appeared on earth for the salvation of human kind; Who was crucified and buried, and arose on the third day." Placidus, hearing this, fell to earth again, and said,

"Lord, I believe that Thou art He Who made all things and converts those that err." And the Lord said to him,

"If thou believest, go to the bishop of the city, and have thyself baptized." Placidus answered,

"Dost Thou wish, Lord, that I announce these things to my wife and sons, that they too may believe?" The Lord said,

"Announce it to them, that they too may be cleansed with thee; and on the following day thou shalt come here that I may appear to thee again and reveal to thee more fully the things that are to be." When he had come home and told these things to his wife a-bed, she exclaimed,

"My lord, I too saw Him this past night, and He said to me: 'To-morrow thou and thy husband and thy sons shall come to Me'; and now I know that He was Jesus Christ." And so they went to the Bishop of Rome, who joyfully baptized them and called Placidus by the name of Eustachius, and his wife Theospes and his sons Agapetes and Theospitus. In the morning Eustachius went to the hunt as before, and coming to that place, he dismissed his soldiers under the pretext of tracing the hunt; and standing there he awaited the form of his earlier vision; and he fell on his face and said,

"I implore Thee, O Lord, that Thou reveal what Thou didst promise to Thy servant." The Lord said to him,

"Blessed art thou, Eustachius, who hast received the cleansing of My grace, for now thou hast conquered the Devil; thou hast trampled upon him that deceived thee;

and soon thy faith will appear. For the Devil arms him wrathfully against thee because thou hast left him: therefore it behooveth thee to endure many things, that thou mayest receive the crown of victory; it behooveth thee to suffer much, that thou mayest be humbled from the height of this world's vanity and exalted again in spiritual wealth. Therefore fail not, nor look back upon thy former glory, for by thy trials it behooveth thee to show thyself a second Job. But when thou art humbled, I shall come to thee and restore thee to thy former glory. And therefore say whether thou wouldst stand the trials now or at the end of thy life." Eustachius said to Him,

"Lord, if it must be so, command that the trials befall us now, but give us the virtue of patience." The Lord answered him,

"Be constant, for My grace will guard your souls." And then the Lord ascended to Heaven; and Eustachius, returning home, told his wife. A few days later a mortal pestilence attacked and carried off all their servants; and some time after that all their horses and cattle suddenly died. Certain ruffians, seeing his loss, broke into his house by night and carried off all the things they found there, and despoiled his house of all his goods and silver and other things; and he gave thanks and escaped naked by night with his wife and sons. Fearing shame, they journeyed to Egypt, and all his goods were reduced to nought by robbery. But the King and the Senate were grieved for this captain because they were unable to find any trace of him.

As they proceeded on their way they came to the sea and found a ship; they embarked on it and set sail. But the ship's master, seeing the wife of Eustachius, who was very beautiful, desired greatly to have her. When they had crossed over he demanded the passage-money of them; and since they had nought to pay it with, he commanded the wife to be held in lieu thereof, for he wished to have her with him. When Eustachius heard this he sadly left

his wife to them, and groaning deeply, he took his children and departed, saying,

"Woe to me and to you, for your mother is delivered to a stranger husband." He came to a certain river that was so full he dared not cross it with his two sons, but he left one behind while he carried the other across. After he had waded over he placed the child that he had carried upon the earth and hastened back to fetch the other. When he had reached the middle of the stream a wolf came running and seized and carried away the child he had put down. He, despairing of it, hastened to the other. But as he left, a lion came and seized the second child and went away. Unable to pursue it, for he was in the middle of the river, he began to weep and tear his hair; and he wished to cast himself into the water, had not divine providence restrained him. But some shepherds, seeing a lion carry off a living child, pursued it with dogs. By divine dispensation the lion cast aside the boy unharmed and went away.—Some tillers, chasing after the wolf, saved the other boy unharmed from its jaws; both of these parties, the shepherds and the farmers, were of the same village, and they reared the boys in their midst.

Eustachius knew this not, but he went on weeping and lamenting, saying,

"Woe to me who once was flourishing like a tree, but am now stripped entire! Woe to me, who was once surrounded with a multitude of soldiers, but now, being alone, am not even permitted to see my sons! I remember, Lord, Thou didst say it behooved me to be tested as was Job; but behold I find more done to me than to him: for he, though stripped of his possessions, had the dung-heap on which he might sit, but I have nought of that; he had his friends to comfort him, but I, only the wild beasts that carried off my sons; his wife was spared to him, but mine is taken from me: give me peace, O Lord, from my troubles, and put a guard upon my mouth, lest my heart turn to evil speech and I be cast out from before Thy face." As he was

saying this with tears he came to a certain village, and he kept the fields of the men of the village fifteen years for pay; but his sons were reared in another village and knew not that they were brothers. But the Lord preserved the wife of Eustachius, nor did that stranger know her, but rather he dismissed her untouched and ended his life.

The Emperor and Roman people were greatly vexed by foes; and he, remembering Placidus, who had often fought vigorously against these same foes, was much saddened by his sudden disappearance, and sent many soldiers to various parts of the world, promising great wealth and honor to him who might find him. Two of the soldiers who had once served Placidus came to the village in which he was. Placidus beheld them coming from the field and he recognized them from afar by their walk; and calling to mind his former dignity he was troubled, and he said,

"Lord, even as I have seen beyond my hope these who were once with me, grant me that I may some time see my spouse: my sons I know have been consumed by wild beasts." A voice came to him, saying,

"Have faith, Eustachius, for thou shalt soon recover thy honor, and have back again thy wife and sons."

When he met the soldiers, they did not know him; they saluted him and asked him if he knew any stranger by the name of Placidus, and his wife and sons. He said he did not. But when he prayed to them they went to his hostel, and Eustachius served them. And recalling his former state, he was unable to restrain his tears, but he went out and washed his face, and coming in again he served them. They, gazing upon him, said to each other,

"How like he is to the man we seek!" And one of them answered and said,

"Very like he is indeed; therefore let us look, and if he has the mark of the scar upon his head, which he received in war, it is he." And they sought for it; and they leaped up and kissed him and asked about his wife and sons. He

told them that his sons were dead and his wife held captive. But all the neighbors came as to a spectacle, while the soldiers were telling of his valor and his former glory. Then the soldiers told him the Emperor's command and clad him in the best of garments. After a journey of fifteen days they came to the Emperor, who met him when he heard of his arrival, and fell upon him when he saw him, and kissed him. He told all of them in order the things that had happened to him, and he was given the captainship of the army and made to exercise the office that he had before.

Having counted the soldiers and realizing that they were but few against so many foes, he ordered recruits to be gathered in all the cities and towns. It chanced that the country in which his sons were reared was written down to give two recruits, and all the dwellers in that place designated the two young men as more fitting than the others to the captain. He, seeing the youths fair and well-conducted, was greatly pleased with them, and received them among his chief fellows; and then he set out to the war, and, after defeating the enemy, he caused his army to rest in the place where his wife tarried as guest. The two youths were entertained in the house of their mother, not knowing that she was their mother; and as they sat talking among themselves at mid-day, they discoursed to each other about their childhood. Their mother, who sat opposite them, hearkened closely to what they said. The older one said to the younger,

"I recall nothing of my childhood save that my father was a captain of soldiers, and my mother was very beautiful; and they that had two sons, myself and a younger one who was also very fair; and they took us one night and went aboard a ship, going I know not whither. And when we left the ship my mother, I know not how, was left at sea; but my father went on and carried us weeping; and when he came to a river he crossed it with my younger brother and left me behind on the bank. But as he was

coming back to fetch me, a wolf came and seized the other, and before he reached me, a lion came out of the forest and seized me and carried me into the forest. Some shepherds snatched me from the lion's mouth: and I was reared as thou knowest in their keeping, nor might I learn what became of my father and my brother." When the younger one heard this he began to weep and said,

"By the Lord, from what I hear I am thy brother, for those who reared me told me that they saved me from a wolf." And they wept and embraced and kissed each other. Their mother, hearing this, and gazing upon them as they thus told their fortunes, debated long with herself whether these were her sons; and on the following day she went to the captain and spoke to him, saying,

"I beseech thee, Lord, that thou command me to be taken to my own country, for I am a Roman, and a stranger here." As she said this she beheld on him the mark of her husband and recognized him; and unable to contain herself longer she fell at his feet and said, "I beg thee, Lord, to tell me of thy former life, for I think that thou art Placidus, the captain, called also by the name of Eustachius; whom the Savior converted as Placidus; who endured such and such trials, and whose wife, who is myself, was taken from him at sea, but was saved from all corruption, and who had two sons, Agapetes and Theospitus." When Eustachius heard this he gazed close upon her and recognized his wife; and kissing her with tears of joy he glorified God Who had consoled those who were afflicted. Then his wife said to him,

"My Lord, where are our sons?" And he said,

"They were carried off by wild beasts." And he told her how he lost them. And she said,

"Let us give thanks to God, for I think that even as He hath permitted us to find each other, He will permit us to find our sons." And he said,

"I tell thee, they were taken by wild beasts." And she answered,

"Yesterday as I sat in the garden I heard two youths recounting such and such things about their childhood, and I believe they are our sons: ask them and they will tell thee." And Eustachius summoned them; and when he heard the tale of their childhood he knew that they were his sons; and he and their mother embraced them and kissed them often, shedding many tears. And all the army rejoiced greatly at their reunion and at the victory over the barbarians.

When they returned, it came to pass that Trajan had died, and Hadrian, a worse man and a more sinful, had succeeded him. He received them and prepared a great banquet to celebrate their reunion and their victory. But on the next day he proceeded to the temple of the gods to make sacrifice there for the victory over the barbarians. When the Emperor saw that Eustachius would make no sacrifice for his reunion with his family nor for his victory, he commanded him to do so. Eustachius said,

"I worship the God Christ, and sacrifice to Him alone." Then the Emperor, becoming very wroth, put him and his wife and sons in the arena and had a fierce lion sent out against them. The lion ran up towards them, but lowering its head as if before holy folk, it retreated humbly from them. Then the Emperor commanded them to heat a brazen bull and had them put living within it. These holy people, having prayed and commended themselves to God, entered the bull and there yielded up the ghost; and on the third day they were drawn forth in the presence of the Emperor. They were found untouched within, for the heat of the fire had touched neither their hair nor any part of them. The Christians bore their bodies away and buried them in a very famous place, and there they erected an oratory. They suffered under Hadrian, who began to reign about the year of our Lord 120, on the calends of November; or according to some, twelve days before the calends of October.

FABLIAUX

INTRODUCTION TO FABLIAUX

The *fabliaux* represent the antithesis of the artificial and worshipful attitude towards woman that had become a convention in the chivalrous romances of the school of Chrétien de Troyes. Naturally it would have been too much to expect the middle classes to share in the artificial, exalted, swooning devotion of the ideal knight towards womankind. To the burghers of the Middle Ages woman was a highly practical problem,—very much of a problem, if we are to believe the stories they told about her. The obverse of the romances is the body of cynical and realistic stories which regaled the men of the middle classes, chiefly at the expense of their wives. The plots are concerned for the most part with marital infidelity and deception; the usual characters are the Husband, the Wife, and the Priest or Lover. The action is sometimes cleverly worked out, as in the Tale of the Tresses; sometimes it is little more than a meaningless incident or a poor joke, as in The Reaped Field. Some are harmless pleasantries; some, like The Ghost Knight, are refined enough, even though there is marital deception involved. The term *fabliaux* is clearly fairly wide in its application, but the typical story of the type is apt to be unedifying in the extreme, even when it is most clever.

The rude frankness and obscenity of the *fabliaux* do not mean that they represent a truer picture of medieval life than the romances. As Huizinga has said in his *Waning of the Middle Ages*, both types of literature are alike idealizations: the one of refined society, the other of the crude animal life of human beings that society to a certain extent tries to deny or overlook. In this sense the lascivious matron of the *fabliaux* is as much an ideal as the haughty and aloof lady who imposed all sorts of chivalrous tasks upon her devoted knight as a qualification for her favor. The ideal is inverted, but none the less exaggerated.

Just as the *fabliaux* are of many types, so they come from many sources. Some are as untraceable as the jokes that spring

up and are gone every year; some are based on puns and plays on words; some are clearly paralleled by and probably descended from Oriental tales. The Fable of the Tresses, for instance, may be found in a very similar form in the Hindu *Pantchatantra;* others have analogues in other Oriental collections. Whatever the source, however, the medieval story-teller has always assimilated them to his own atmosphere and *milieu;* and it is for this reason that they may be considered at first thought as more veracious pictures of the life of the Middle Ages than the more elegant literature of the noble classes.

The text used for these tales is Méon's *Nouveau Recueil de Fabliaux et Contes,* Paris, 1823, Vol. II.

THE REAPED FIELD

Ye shall hear of a countryman who took a fair and seemly wife who was rich and of good lineage, but of evil disposition, for she was so shrewish that none might overcome her. One day they went to take their game and pleasure in a field; the goodman said:

"This field hath been well reaped." The wife replied,

"It is not reaped; it is mowed." He swore by St. John that it had not been mowed within the year. She swore by St. Omer that it was mowed and cut. When the goodman heard her contradict him, he was very angry: he gave her over sixty blows at once. She fell down faint upon the earth and said no word aloud; since she could make no sound, she had to signify still with her hands that the field was mowed and cut. Greatly was the husband at a loss: he raised his hand and crossed himself, and much he marveled, for he saw that he might never overcome her; and he commended her to the Devil.

THE PRIEST BEHIND THE CHEST

There are some folk who heard a jest erewhile, and they received the jape with greater pleasure than a matter of great authority. And herewith I will recount it to you even as it was truly told to me.

In Hainault there was a dame dwelling within a town who was courteous enow, full of jest and solace; love held her in his bonds. No mention will I make of her name and origin, for it might be told in such quarters that it would turn against her, and the greater would be the grievance therefor. This dame was married: she was fair and savory,

gay, joyous and amorous. One day it chanced that she had with her in her chamber a fair and well-instructed clerk, and they were eating and drinking together, for they had all they might desire of meat and drink. Many a word did they speak of love, and well might they take their ease with kisses and embraces; I know not if there was further game than that. Now when they had reached this point a comely varlet came into the house and knocked at the chamber. The clerk heard it, and he was little pleased thereat.

"Dame," quoth he, "what shall become of me? How shall I bear myself?"

"My friend," said she, "thou shalt go behind that chest and lie there in secret until he hath departed: I know not what he seeks." He therefore hid himself behind the chest, and very loudly did the varlet cry out. At this word the lady let him in. Often had the varlet been with that dame privily; and when he saw meat and drink laid ready, he seated himself without delay. The lady showed him ill cheer, for the game pleased her not: she had a companion within of whom the varlet knew naught.

"Dame," quoth the varlet, "never have I seen such cheer of thee, thou knowest so much of our affair that thou shouldst show me better mien." Thereat the lady was appeased, and he embraced and kissed her, nor did she refuse. This life she had led before, and entered into it before this time. They drank enow and regaled themselves as much as it pleased them to; but little did it please the clerk who had stowed and hidden himself away; and the thing that irked him most was that he beheld the varlet seated beside the dame and having such delight with her. His heart was sorely vexed.

At even-tide the husband of the lady came home, for it was night; and this was great annoyance to the varlet, who was greatly affeared when he heard him. Little did it please the dame.

"Lady," quoth he, "where shall I go?"

"I shall tell thee: I know of nothing better. There is a table dressed yonder: hide thyself there: I shall make much noise and quarrel with my husband until I cause him to go to bed; and when thou seest the time therefor, thou mayest make good thy escape." He stowed himself as best he might. The husband knocked hastily on the door as a fool might. The dame opened to him angrily and received him with foul words.

"Whence comest thou, miserable and unhappy caitiff? Never art thou at home. Thou art a man lacking reason, and followest unclean ways: thou comest from the tavern, and all day long thou leavest me alone: shame on thy greedy gullet! Come to bed; it is time."

"Fair sister, be not hasty; first I must have to eat." She began to berate him, but he sat down and called for food and drink, whereat she was greatly angered, and grumbled sorely.

"Sister," said he, "be silent for God's sake, and for thy love keep peace: shame on the man who is dismayed, for that one yonder will pay for it all." He was aware of no visitor, but he pointed with his finger at the chest, which was fairly garnished. The clerk believed that he was being blamed, and thought that the husband knew he was there, and that he had seen him when he came in: he feared he would come to him, for he was holding a club. So he came forth and approached the husband and said:

"Sir," quoth he, "by our Lord's death thou dealest the game unfairly if he also does not pay as much who is supported behind that table."

Now was the goodman who had such guests within his house made aware: those who took their ease of his goods might well laugh at his cost; till now they did his work for him. But he was debonair and frank, for he was a long-suffering cuckold: he was a prudent man and had no care for strife: therefore he concealed the matter, nor did he speak a word to them. I say no more what befell among them, nor how the dame fitted herself thereto: she was

not too greatly embarrassed, for of a necessity she was made aware that her husband was a true cuckold. If her heart was somewhat abashed, she knew how to restore it: I need not recount what she replied or how she excused herself: she knew so well how to conclude it that I shall be silent on that score.

THE POOR CLERK

I do not wish to make too long a tale: this fable tells us and relates that there was a clerk dwelling in Paris who by reason of his great poverty was forced to leave the city, for he had naught left to engage or sell, from which he might have sustenance. Quite clearly he saw that he might no longer tarry in the city, for evil was his sojourneying there; since he might know of naught to undertake, it was better for him to leave his studies. So the clerk departed and went to his country as one who is well-pleased; but he had not one piece of silver, and he felt great discomfort thereat. The day that the clerk departed he neither ate nor drank.

He came to a town on his way and he approached the house of a citizen. There was no one at home but the dame and her maid. The lady was of haughty mien, as the clerk perceived; he asked hostel of her for love and charity.

"Sir Clerk," said she, "my husband is not at home now, and I believe that he would blame me if I harbored thee or any other without his leave." Then the clerk spoke:

"Dame," he said, "I come from the schools, and I have gone a great distance this day. Do thou do courteously by me, and harbor me this day." She received this with greater denial than before. Just then a boy came running with two kegs of wine; the dame took them in and hid them as quickly as she might. The maid prepared a cake that she had baked, and she drew forth some pork-flesh that was in a pot and put it on a platter.

"Certes," quoth the clerk, "it would please me to remain with thee." And she said straightway,

"Sir Clerk, I do not wish to harbor thee: go thou and seek elsewhere." So the clerk departed from her, and the dame, who thought him slow, shut the door on his heels. But he had not gone far when he met a priest wrapped up in his black cape, who passed him by, saying never a word. He entered into the house whence the clerk had departed. The clerk lamented, wondering where he would find harborage. A goodman heard him lament, and straightway began to address him:

"Who art thou, who goest there?"

"I am a clerk, and very weary am I, for I have gone all day without ceasing, and I could find no hostel."

"In the name of God and St. Nicholas, Dan Clerk, be not dismayed; thou hast found thy hostel. Tell me, hast thou been in this house?"

"Sir, I have just departed from it, I tell thee truly." Then the man began to swear:

"Turn thee back, then, hardily; by the faith I owe St. Clement, the hostel is mine, and I shall provide for thee there, and anyone else I choose. I am returning straightway from the mill, with ground meal to make my children bread." So they went on hand in hand, and anon they came to the door; and the goodman, who was carrying his burden, called out loudly so that the priest heard him.

"Alas," cried she, "it is my husband! Sir Priest, by my love, haste thee and hide in that stable: be assured, for I will get him to bed as soon as I can." And the priest leaped into the stable without delay. The husband kept crying out until she opened the door. He and the clerk came in together.

"Dan Clerk, cast off thy wraps," said the husband, "and be merry and content; take thine ease, for I am right joyous. Dame," he said, "what art thou doing? Hast thou naught ready for us to eat?"

"Sir, if I may be pardoned, I tell thee truly that there is nothing." Then the husband began to swear:

"By the holy relics of God, is it true?"

"Certes, thou knowest what thou didst leave in the morning when thou didst go to the mill."

"Dame," he said, "I do not think of that, so God bless me; I care only for this clerk."

"Sire," she said, "it behooves thee now to do with this ill what thou canst: a meal is soon passed by."

"Work fast," quoth the maid; "take the flour and eggs and prepare bread for them to eat: then they may go to bed."

The husband was very angry. He spoke to the clerk:

"Dan Clerk," he said, "so God bless me, thou hast heard many things: tell us a tale or a song or an adventure while the food is being cooked: we need it now." The clerk replied in brief:

"Sire," he said, "I know not how I may tell fables that I do not know; but I shall tell thee of a fear that I have had, for I know nought of fables: I shall tell thee of my fear."

"And I will hold thee quit," said the husband, "with thy fear, for I know that by nature thou art not a teller of tales. But tell this adventure of thine: do it for love of this goodman."

"Sir," said the clerk, "this is the sum of it: to-day I was passing through a wood, and when I had left it I found myself near a great herd of swine: big and little, dark and light; but the herdsman was not there, and some of them were very fat swine. As I was gazing upon those swine, a great wolf come by and took away one of them with him: it was very fat, and its flesh was as fat as that which the maid took forth from the pot but now." As soon as the dame heard this her hope was gone.

"Dame, what is this? Doth the clerk say true in what he tells?" asked the husband. She knew that denial would not help her a whit.

"Yea, sir," she said; "without doubt. I had purchased some."

"Dame," he said, "I am glad of it, for there is then what meat is needful. Proceed, Dan Clerk, with the tale, for now we need have no care." The clerk delayed not, but told on:

"Sir," he said, "when I saw that the wolf had thus seized the swine I was greatly troubled. The wolf was not slow to eat, and he rent and tore it apart. I looked on a long time at the blood which dripped down: it was another kind of red than the wine that the boy brought to this house to-day when I asked for hostel.'" The dame knew not what to say, so greatly was she angered. Her husband addressed her:

"What is this, dame; have we wine?"

"Yea, sir, by St. Martin: we have great store of it. I thought of thee better than I said."

"Dame," said he, "so God help me, know that I am glad of it, for the sake of this clerk who is lodged here. Certes I am rejoiced at it. Dan Clerk, say on."

"Surely," said the clerk; "with pleasure. Sir, the wolf was very fierce. I knew not what to do, but I looked about me to see if I might find something wherewith to strike him. What more need I say? I found a stone—think not I lie—like the cake within here, which the maid was making then: it is much greater than that stone." The dame heard and saw and knew that there was no help in concealment; her husband looked at her and inquired of her once more,

"What, dame, have we cake?"

"Of a surety, a fair good one," said she, "made with eggs."

"That amends our case," said the husband; "by my faith, Dan Clerk, that fear of thine was a good kind of fear. Thou mayest be of good cheer, for we have bread and wine and meat for the which I am beholden to thee alone. Now thy fear is deceived."

"It is not, so God bless me; it might not be yet. For when I had taken the stone I thought to cast it at the wolf, and he began to regard me even as the priest who gazes at me from the window of the stable yonder."

"Priest!" cried the husband. "Is there a priest in there?" He leaped up as soon as he might and ran quickly to seize the priest. The priest wished to defend himself: he was caught in great annoy. So quickly the goodman seized him that he pulled his robe from him: he gave the coat and hood to the clerk who had told of his fear. He gave him what he deserved indeed; and the priest had enow of shame.

This fable tells us and recounts what folk say in the proverb: one giveth bread to him one thinketh not to see. For one may not know the thing that often haps, and that is scathe to many folk; and in especial to the dame who showed such ill cheer to the clerk when he asked harborage of her: if she had granted it, he would not have said a word of what he recounted in that night.

THE GHOST-KNIGHT

Without long delay it behooves me to tell the adventure of a knight and lady which befell, so the book tells us, not long time since in Normandy. This knight wished to make a certain lady his *amie*, and so great pain he suffered for her that she was certain he loved her, for he did all things he knew of that might please the lady. I do not wish to make long tale: this knight essayed so long that one day she questioned him and asked him on what account he required her love of her, since no day of his life had he wrought chivalry or prowess to please her and earn her love of her. And so she said, smiling and without anger, that he might never be lord of her love until she might know without doubt how he bore shield and lance, and if he knew how to be successful therein.

"Madame, if it does not irk thee," said the knight, "grant me but that I undertake a tourney against thy husband; and let it be before his gate and in such a place that thou mayest see the whole tournament openly: thou shalt see, if thou wilt, how lance and shield befit me." The dame gave permission to the knight without delay to undertake the tournament. He thanked her fairly, and straightway went about to perform it. And now it was decreed, and they asked and invited knights of valor to be there. Thus they sent forth throughout the country; nor did they cease until the set time, for they had good will of it; and they commended the hour and the day to the knights, who came in great numbers.

And now the tournament was assembled, and it was great and proud and fierce, as any man might know who saw those knights put on their hauberks and lace their helms when the time came to joust: each one was ready betimes. The two who had undertaken the tourney were the first in the place, all armed on swift steeds and ready to break lances. So they leaped up without delay; they joined shields, lowered lances, loosened their reins, and hurtled forward. Right nobly they trusted to their horses: they broke and shattered lances and spared themselves not at all; each struck the other's heads as well as he might. The knight who had undertaken the tournament and sworn by his soul to the lady's husband that he would joust with him no matter what it cost, now left his side quicker than an arrow from a well-drawn bow: he bore him down with lifted lance, and neither harness nor cingle might hold him up: he fell down all of a heap. When the lady saw this mishap of her lord she was sad on the one hand, but on the other greatly pleased that her lover had done so well. Why should I make long debate? They had well commenced the tournament when harm and loss befell them, for a knight was killed. I cannot tell how or why he died, but all were sad and grieved at it, and they buried him underneath an elm. After that the tournament was scat-

tered, for it was late, and each man went to his hostel. The lady, without waiting longer, sent commandment to the knight by two pages that, if he wished her to have him as her knight, he should come to speak with her that evening, else she would never hold him as her lover. He, who was right glad of that command, said that he would truly come: he would not let it be though he were cut in pieces for it; and so the pages left him.

When the night was come it was late for him ere he might go where he was meant to be: a maid was watching for his coming. When he arrived he saluted her. She led him into a chamber in great pain and fear: there she said he was to wait until the lady came to him. Then the maid departed and told her mistress tidings of the knight, and that he was in the room where he awaited.

"Dost thou say true?"

"Yea, by my soul."

"And I shall go," said the lady, "when my husband is a-bed."

The knight was ill-pleased that she was so long in coming, and he might not hold himself from falling prone asleep, for he was very weary by reason of the arms he had borne that day. And the dame, who was afeared because he had come so late, went in to him soon. Then she saw that he was sleeping, without doubt; she made no cry nor thrust, but straightway returned again. She called her maid:

"Go quickly," she said, "without delay, and tell that knight from me that he is to depart with all speed." The maid asked her why, and what the reason was.

"I shall tell thee the cause," said the lady; "it is because he is asleep."

"By the spirit of God, thou art wrong," said the maid, "as it appears to me."

"Thou liest, girl, entirely; even though he had to wait the whole night for the kiss of a lady such as I. Therefore I am ill-pleased, for I know that if he loved me he

would not do so, though a hundred pounds were given to him. Go and dismiss him now." Thereat the girl went back to the knight who was sleeping on his elbow. She went to him and gave him a thrust. He leaped up straightway to his feet.

"Welcome, lady," he said; "thou hast tarried long."

"Thou salutest me in vain, Sir Knight," said the maid; "betimes thou wilt hear other tidings. My lady, who is lying beside her lord, hath sent me hither to command thee not to be so hardy nor so wilful that thou ever come into a place where she is."

"Alas, damsel, wherefore? Tell me why!"

"I grant it thee: it is because thou shouldst not sleep in any place where thou art waiting upon so noble a dame, so fair and white and tender, and withal so worthy as my lady."

"Damsel," he said, "by my soul I have misdone, it is true. But of thy charity I pray thee, if I have thy permission, that I may go where they are lying, my lady and her lord: for know that I never had greater desire to do aught else."

"All this I grant thee, by my faith," said the maid. He, right happy at the news, hastened into the chamber without delay. He had no hindrance to delay him. There was a light in the chamber that was wont to burn there. The knight went straight unto the bed and paused a little way from it and drew his sword. The husband opened his eyes and perceived him there: the knight did not move.

"Who art thou?" he asked. The knight, who had no desire to tarry, answered him,

"I am," quoth he, "the knight that was done to death to-day; well must thou recall it."

"Well I know; and what brings thee here?"

"Sir, I am in great pain, nor will my soul be free of it until this lady who lieth beside thee has pardoned me, if it please her, for a single misdeed I did when I was living. So may God in Heaven give thee honor and joy and enow

of His good things, as thou prayest her to pardon me, for I have told thee the reason and cause of my coming here."

"Dame, dame," said the lord, "if thou hast any anger or displeasure or ill-will towards this knight, pardon him, I pray thee."

"I shall not," said the lady; "thou troublest thy head in vain, for this is but a phantom or such creature that deceiveth us by night."

"Certes it is not, I believe."

"I will not do it, sir; without doubt I promised the knight so by Lord God and His mother."

"By the faith thou owest St. Peter," said the lord, "whence comes this anger and ill-will the lady harbors towards thee?"

"Sir, in no wise will I ever tell of it," said the knight; "for if I have ill of it now, I should have worse if I said a word of it."

"Surely then it will be pardoned thee, Sir Knight," said the lady; "I will distress thee no longer."

"I cry thee mercy, my sweet friend, for more I do not ask of thee." Then he departed straightway; well had he turned the matter, but if he had not wrought it so, he had never recovered the love that he had newly found.

Pierre Danfol who made and told this fable first did it but for the instruction of those who may speak of it if they encounter such adventure: for none hears it that doth not amend if ill-deed do not too greatly surmount it.

THE TALE OF THE TRESSES

Now that I have undertaken it, it were not right for me to be deterred by any pain or anguish from rhyming the fable of the tresses. I have given some small part of my time to it; do ye hearken therefore to the tale that the fable tells.

A good man and hardy, sage in word and deed, doer of

good tasks, was lying abed one Tuesday night beside his wife, who was wondrously fair, a creature of great delight. He fell asleep, but she was wakeful, for she awaited other adventure. And now behold her lover hastily entered in the house for good or ill: he came in by the window as one who knew it well. He came to the bed and unshod himself, leaving neither shoe nor slipper, neither coat nor shift nor brace, and he did with the lady as he willed. She for her part turned from her husband who lay at her side; and he who was newly come did his desire. Thereafter, if the fable does not lie, the lady and her lover both fell asleep together. The goodman woke first as one who is wont to do so; he turned to his wife and cast his arm about her, and on the other side he felt the head of him who shared the couch. Well he knew there must be some one there, and that the bed was common: therefore he sprang up as one who is greatly moved. He grasped the man who lay beside his wife so straitly that he might not escape. The man felt himself taken, and great was his distress. The husband seized him by the neck as one who was his enemy, and stowed him in a great tun, where he might have little pleasure, truly. The husband then returned to the bed, and called to his wife,

"Hasten," he said; "make no denial; take and seize this man by the hair, and do not let him go for any pain that thou mayest have of it: I shall go light a candle that I may know the rascal." At this word the dame leaped up, and she seized her lover by the hair: greatly the misprision irked him, but she did it against her will. The goodman said,

"Fair sister, take care he does not escape thee: if he does thou shalt die a shameful death, without fail." After this he spoke no more, but went to light a candle. The lady called to her lover and said,

"Make haste and clothe thyself: be not slow nor lazy, recreant nor faint-hearted." He leaped up from the tun and anon he clad and dressed himself. Hearken now to a

marvelous tale of how a woman can deceive, and tell falsehood for truth. There was a calf in the house that was tied to a cord and a stick: it was a very comely beast. The lady went her ways and untied it; she took it by the head and put it in the tun. Thus her friend was saved without misprision or distress, and he returned no more that night.

The goodman blew hastily at the fire, so much that he lacked little of losing all his breath. When the candle was lit he wept from both his eyes because of the smoke. Then he made haste until he reached the tun where the dame was holding the calf, and he commenced to speak:

"Dost thou hold him fast?"

"Yea, truly, sir."

"And I," quoth he, "have brought my sword to cut off his head." When he came to the tun he beheld the calf that the woman guarded.

"Ahi, ahi!" he cried. "So false a thing is woman, there is not a creature under Heaven thou canst not deceive, in truth. By my head, thou hast released thy lover thence: I did not put this beast in here."

"Sir," she said, "thou didst so: nothing else didst thou put there."

"Say not so, for it would be false: thou liest like a traitor," said the husband: "depart, thou harlot!" Thereat the woman departed and went out to be with her lover at her leisure, for she held him very dear; and the husband, who was wearied and travailed, went to his bed. So he fell asleep unwitting what to do, and the dame contrived easily to deceive him and win grace of him. She called to a woman who was a friend of hers:

"Fair sister, if it please thee, go thou and sleep with my husband from now till day, and to-morrow I will pay six sous of silver into thy hand: for if he should feel thee beside him he would have no memory of me, but he would suppose that I was the one that lay by his side: great is the fear of public shame." She, covetous of the money, said

that she would go straightway, but she wished that he would in no wise strike her or do her harm.

"Account it otherwise," said the dame; "it may not be."

Then she, who knew the manner of it well, entered into the house: she stripped herself quite naked and laid herself down beside the husbandman. But I fear that evil befell her for it: the husband, who was not wearied and travailed save with anger and displeasure, awoke; and when he felt her beside him he believed that he had found his wife.

"Aha," he cried, "proved fool that thou art, hast thou come back? If I ever have mercy of thee, may I be shamed in all the land!" He did not go far to find a stick, for there were two at the head of the bed. Then he seized her by the hair, which was bright yellow like fine gold, resembling much the head of his own wife. She dared not cry out, but great was her dismay. The husband smote her such mighty blows on all sides that he thought she must be dead; and when he was tired of beating, that was not enough for him. He swore an oath that he would shame her body also. Then he pulled out so much as he might of the hair of her head. She fled away without pause like a caitiff wretch, and great was her quarrel with the wife. She told her of the bearing of the man towards her: her back was all to-broken; she might never win her bread, for there was no hand or foot of her that was not broken, she was aware: the tears flowed down her face, and so great was her woe about her tresses that she was fain to die.

When the dame had heard all she had to tell, she comforted her as best she might and told her she would go and fetch her robe and shift. Straightway she went thither and entered in the house. He, thinking he had beaten her, was gone to bed again and had fallen asleep. The dame sought and looked about her until she found the tresses which she had thrust under the pillow; then she searched for the robe and shift, so that he knew it not. She took both and

stowed them well away. Then she took thought of a matter of great deception. There was a palfrey within, and the dame, who was skilled in arts and contrivances, went thither and cut off the horse's tail and thrust it under the bed's head. Then she stripped off her shift and right skillfully and well she laid herself down and placed herself beside her husband, who was lying in the middle of the bed.

When the day grew bright the husband awoke and felt his wife, and he looked at her.

"By my faith," he said, "thou wert a fool to come back to the house last night, for last evening thou wert so badly beaten that I thought, so God help me, that thou wouldst never depart thence. Confess none the less that when I beat thee so hard last evening thou hadst no recovery: certainly I should marvel much if thy flanks do not pain thee greatly, and if the bones are whole. I wish to know the truth of it."

"Sir," quoth she, "wherefore should I mis-speak in saying that I have any ill? This night thou hadst so lively a dream that thou didst think thou didst beat me." The goodman felt shame and annoy: he touched her head and found great plenty of tresses there, still fast. Then he believed indeed that he was enchanted, tricked and mocked. He took the end of the pillow and lifted it in all haste; he felt there the palfrey's tail: when he had it he would not speak a word for a hundred pounds, and for a long time he was all silent. So greatly was he at a loss that he believed, sooth to say, that all of this had befallen him by enchantment. The lady scolded and blamed him greatly: she said that, as ever God might help her, he had put great shame on her, and if ever he said so great an outrage to her again, he would suffer for it quickly. The husband begged her to pardon him, and with his hands joined he cried her mercy.

"Dame," said he, "so God help me, I thought I had shamed thee for all time and to that end cut off thy hair: but I see it was deception. Never did I dream so ill a

dream, for I cut off the tail of my horse, which angers me to think of."

By this fable ye may know that he does not wisely who believes a woman in aught that befalls; but do all of you remember this tale of one who in such wise turned what was behind before.

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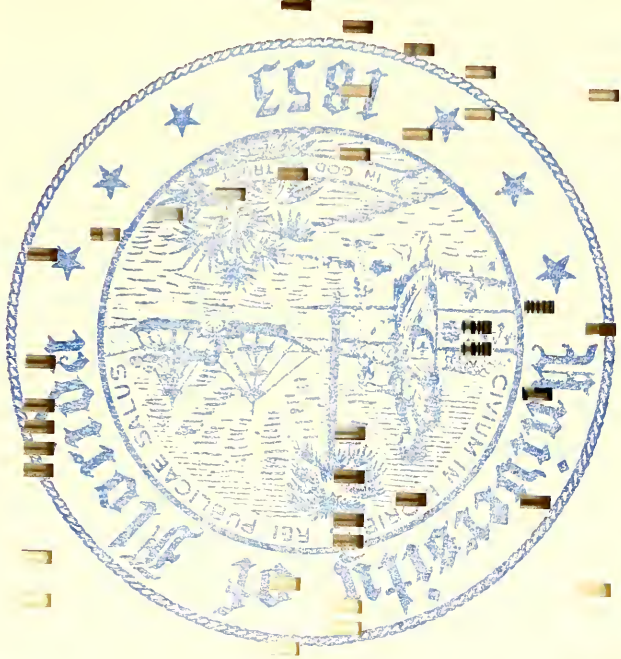

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